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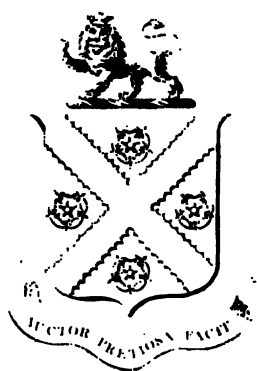
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A
S E L E C T I O N
FROM
THE WRITINGS
OF THE
R E F O R M E R S
AND
EARLY PROTESTANT DIVINES
OF THE
Church of England.

~~~~~  
BY THE REV. LEGH RICHMOND, A. M.  
OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; RECTOR OF TURVEY, BEDFORDSHIRE;  
AND CHAPLAIN TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF KENT.  
~~~~~

THIS VOLUME CONTAINS
VARIOUS TRACTS AND EXTRACTS
FROM THE WORKS OF
BISHOP HOOPER;
WITH
A Memorial of his Life.

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TO THE PUBLIC.

THIS volume contains the most important of the remains of the venerable Bishop and Martyr, JOHN HOOPER. They are now first collected together. The Editors are in possession of two other of his works; the one, a Treatise on "The Sacrament of the Altar," against Bishop Gardiner; the other, "An Oversight and Deliberation upon the holy Prophet Jonah:" but as the Selections already published contain a full declaration of the same arguments, doctrines, and illustrations which would be found in any extracts from those Treatises, it is thought unnecessary to increase the volume dedicated to the writings of Bishop Hooper beyond its present size.

The extreme scarcity and manifest value of the Confession of Faith by that eminent Reformer, as contained in this volume, have induced the Conductors also to publish it as a separate pamphlet, in the hope that so valuable a document of the age of the Reformation may obtain a more extended circulation.

The following Address is reprinted from the original copy of Bishop Hooper's Exposition of some of the Psalms, to which it is prefixed. Although it was in the first instance appropriated only to one of his writings, it has been thought proper to make it a general introduction to the whole volume.

*To all the faithful Flock of Christ, Grace and Peace
from God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and
the Holy Ghost the Comforter.*

Many are the monuments (beloved in the bowels of Christ Jesus) and volumes of the faithful left as legacies to the church of Christ, which, as they are the true riches (for they are spiritual), so ought they to be revered, not only with outward service of body, but also with inward submission of soul: among which monuments, being the treasure of the church, and such jewels indeed as the price of them is invaluable, this excellent work (though wanting bigness, yet full of brightness) of that most learned, godly, faithful, zealous, constant, and in all points praiseworthy Protestant, Master John Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, challengeth no small title of dignity. For, if the words of our Saviour be true (which to improve what incestuous mouth, without horrible blasphemy, a trespass unpardonable, dare presume, seeing he is the very substance of truth itself), that he is a true disciple of Christ, which continueth to the end, then is it the duty of us all, except we hide our profession under the hive of hypocrisy, not only by looking at the life of such a lodesman, to reform our deformities, but also, by tracing over and through the testimonies of the truth (such godly books I mean as are left in writing to the world as undoubted assurances of an unspotted conscience), to thank God for so singular an instrument of his Gospel, and to beseech him to work in us the like love to his law, that we may be partakers of such glory as (no doubt) this notable martyr of God doth immortally enjoy: of whom briefly to insert and say somewhat (because the brightness of such a glittering star cannot be overcast with the clouds of obscurity and darkness) shall be a means to make

the work more commendable, although (in very deed) precious things have their proper price, and therefore consequently will have their deserved praise. And first to touch his blessed beginning, blessed (I say) even from above with the dew of God's grace, his education in Oxford, his prosperous proceeding in the knowledge of divinity, his forsaking not only of the university, but also his common country, his flight into Germany, his return into England, his painfulness in preaching, his fame and credit among the people, his obtained favour with the King's Majesty, his advancement to more than a bishoplike dignity, his dispensation for his ceremonious consecration, his secret enemies the supporters of papistry, his supplantation by their privy conspiracies, his faithful continuance notwithstanding in sowing sincere doctrine, his painfulness in hearing public controversies, his visiting of schools and fountains of learning, his maintaining of godly discipline, his want of partiality in judgment betwixt person and person, his bishoplike behaviour abroad in his diocese, his fatherly affection at home towards his house and family, &c. do warrant him the name of a saint upon earth; and surely God hath registered him in the kalendar of his chosen servants in heaven. Again, the falling away of his favourers when religion languished, the malicious practices of his adversaries threatening his destruction, the blood-thirsty broaching of his persecution, his appearing before the Queen and her council, the tyrannical contumelies of his arch enemy, his spiteful accusation, his mild purgation, his undeserved deprivation, his cruel imprisonment, his hard entertainment, his lamentable lodging, his succourless sickness, his pitiful complaints, his restless tribulations, his strait examinations, his apologetical avouchments, the

committing of him to the Fleet, the tossing of him from the Fleet to the Compter in Southwark, from the Compter in Southwark to the Clink, from the Clink to Newgate, his unjust degradation, his cruel condemnation, and his lamentable execution, &c. all these pageants considered, as they were done, would make a flinty heart to melt, and stony eyes to sweat, not only water, but also blood; and, to be short, the whole body, though all the limbs thereof were as strong as steel, even for pity's sake to tremble. This coming within the compass of my poor consideration, I remembered that Christ Jesus, the only begotten Son of the almighty and eternal God, had passed the like, yea and worse perils, as by the history of his death and passion may appear: that the proto-martyr, St. Stephen, had his tormenters, St. Paul the apostle his persecutors, and other of Christ's disciples their afflictors: then thought I that these sanctified vessels made their vocation honourable, even by their deaths, which were opprobrious, and therefore how can it be, but that this our martyr, worthy Bishop Hooper, offering up his body a burnt sacrifice, lively, reasonable, and acceptable unto God, should give good credit to his doctrine, assure his profession, affirm his vocation, and live in everlasting memory, by the dispersion of his books, though his favour be forgotten, and his body consumed? Of such a soldier, so valiantly fighting under the ensign of his Captain, I cannot say sufficient. Of this I am resolved, that although his earthly tabernacle be destroyed, yet hath he a building given him of God, even a house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens, where God grant us all to reign, as joint heirs with Christ his anointed. To proceed and approach nearer to our purpose (for the premises are effectual enough to breed be-

lief and to kindle reverence in the heart of any true Christian towards this our excellent martyr, replenished with the abundance of God's holy Spirit), I commend unto thy mind (good reader) a good work of this so good a man, namely, *Certain Expositions upon the 23d, 62d, 72d, and 77th Psalms of the Prophet David*, of the which the three last (being gathered together by a godly professor of the truth, Mr. Henry Bull) were never before printed. Their beginnings were usually read in this manner: 23. *The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing.* 62. *My soul truly waiteth upon God.* 72. *Truly God is loving unto Israel, even unto such as are of a clean heart.* 77. *I will cry unto God with my voice, even to God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.* The Expositions of which Psalms to be pithy and profitable, this may be a substantial proof, because they were written in the time of his trouble, when (no doubt) he was talking in spirit with God; and being so occupied, his exercises could not but be heavenly, and therefore effectual, fruitful, and comfortable. Come therefore, you sorrowing soul, which groanest for relief, to this spring: come hither, and hear what a good man wrote, *ex carcere et vinculis*, out of bonds and imprisonment, for thy consolation. Hear him once, hear him twice, hear him often, for thou canst not hear him enough. He giveth thee a pleasant pomander, vouchsafe it the smelling: he soundeth sweet music, it deserveth good dancing: he bids thee to a sumptuous banquet, be not dainty in feeding: he presenteth unto thee a precious diamond, it is worth the taking. O give God thanks for all, and glorify the Lord's name, whom it hath pleased to plant in his vineyard so fruitful a vine, which beareth grapes, God's plenty, of whose juice, O Christ, vouchsafe us to taste,

In clarissimi Doctrina et Pietate Viri JOHANNIS HOOPERI
Martyrium, CONRADI GESNERI Carmen.

*Aureus Hooperus flammis invictus et igni,
Atque suum Christum confessus ad ultima vitæ
Momenta, integritate sua præclarus, et ardens
Exterius flammis, divinus Martyr: at intus
Eximio fidei fervore accensus, ad astra
Spiritus ascendit, cœlesti luce beatus.
In terris cineresque manent, et fama corusca,
Flammæ instar lucens, lucebit dum stabit orbis,
Utcunque immanes Boreæ, magnæque procellæ
Flatibus adversis tam clarum abrumpere lumen
Nitantur frustra. Nam quæ Deus ipse secundat,
Quis prohibere queat? mortalia facta sed ultro
Et commenta rumpunt, vastaque voragine sidunt.
Hooperi exemplo, quotquot spiratis Jesu
Doctrinam Christi, discrimina temnere vitæ
Durare, et vosmet rebus servare secundis
Discite. Namque dabit Deus his meliora; nec auris
Audit ulla, oculus vel vidit, sed neque captus
Humanae mentis potuit complectier unquam,
Qualia, quanta Deus servet sua bona beatis.*

THE LIFE, &c.

OF

BISHOP HOOPER.

JOHN HOOPER, student and graduate in the university of Oxford, after the study of the sciences, wherein he had abundantly profited and proceeded, through God's secret vocation was stirred with fervent desire to the love and knowledge of the Scriptures. In the reading and searching whereof, as there lacked in him no diligence, joined with earnest prayer: so neither wanted unto him the grace of the Holy Ghost to satisfy his desire, and to open unto him the light of true divinity.

Thus Master Hooper, growing more and more, by God's grace, in ripeness of spiritual understanding, and shewing withal some sparkles of his fervent spirit, being then about the beginning of the six articles, in the time of King Henry the Eighth, fell eftssoon into displeasure and hatred of certain Rabbines in Oxford, who by and by began to stir coals against him, whereby, and especially by the procurement of Doctor Smith, he was compelled to avoid the university, and so removing from thence, was retained in the house of Sir Thomas Arundel, and there was his steward, till the time that Sir Thomas Arundel, having intelligence of his opinions and religion, which he in no case did favour, and yet exceedingly favouring the person and conditions of the man, found the means to send him on a message to the Bishop of Winchester, writing his letter privily to the Bishop, by conference of learning to do some good upon him, but in any case requiring him to send home his servant to him again.

6 THE FATHERS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

forget our old friend and fellow Master Hooper. And if you will please not to forget us again, then I pray you let us hear from you."

Whereunto Master Hooper, answering again, first gave to Master Bullinger and the rest right hearty thanks, for that their singular good-will, and undeserved affection, appearing not only now, but at all times, towards him: declaring moreover, that as the principal cause of his removing to his country was the matter of religion; so touching the unpleasantness and barrenness of that country of theirs, there was no cause therein, why he could not find in his heart to continue his life there, as soon as in any place in the world, and rather than in his own native country, if there were nothing else in his conscience that moved him so to do.

And as touching the forgetting of his old friends, although, said he, the remembrance of a man's country naturally doth delight him, neither could he deny, but God had blessed his country of England with many great commodities: yet neither the nature of country, nor pleasure of commodities, nor newness of friends, should ever induce him to the oblivion of such friends and benefactors, whom he was so entirely bound unto: "and therefore you shall be sure," said he, "from time to time to hear from me, and I will write unto you how it goeth with me. But the last news of all I shall not be able to write: for there," said he (taking Master Bullinger by the hand), "where I shall take most pains, there shall you hear of me to be burnt to ashes, and that shall be the last news, which I shall not be able to write unto you, but you shall hear of me, &c."

To this also may be added another like prophetic demonstration, foreshewing before the manner of his martyrdom wherewith he should glorify God, which was this: when Master Hooper being made

Bishop of Worcester and Gloucester should have his coat of arms given him by the herald, as the manner here in England is, every bishop to have his arms assigned unto him (whether by the appointment of Master Hooper, or by the herald, I have not certainly to say), that the coat of arms which were to him allotted was this: a lamb in a fiery bush; and the sunbeams from heaven descending down upon the lamb, rightly denoting, as it seemed, the order of his sufferings, which afterwards followed.

But now to the purpose of our story again. Thus when Master Hooper had taken his farewell of Master Bullinger and his friends in Zurich, he made his repair again into England in the reign of King Edward the Sixth, where he coming to London used continually to preach, most times twice, at least once every day, and never failed.

In his sermons, according to his accustomed manner, he corrected sin, and sharply inveighed against the iniquity of the world, and corrupt abuses of the church: the people in great flocks and companies daily came to hear his voice, "as the most melodious sound and tune of Orpheus's harp," as the proverb saith: insomuch that oftentimes when he was preaching, the church would be so full, that none could enter further than the doors thereof. In his doctrine he was earnest, in tongue eloquent, in the Scriptures perfect, in pains indefatigable.

Moreover, besides other his gifts and qualities, this is in him to be marvelled, that even as he began, so he continued still unto his life's end. For neither could his labour and pain-taking break him, neither promotion change him, neither dainty fare corrupt him. His life was so pure and good, that no kind of slander (although divers went about to reprove it) could fasten any faults upon him. He was of body strong, his health whole and sound, his wit very

pregnant, his invincible patience able to sustain whatsoever sinister fortune and adversity could do. He was constant of judgment, a good justice, spare of diet, sparer of words, and sparest of time. In house-keeping very liberal, and sometimes more free than his living would extend unto. Briefly, of all those virtues and qualities required of St. Paul in a good bishop, in his Epistle to Timothy, I know not one in this good bishop lacking. He bare in countenance and talked always with a certain severe and grave grace, which might peradventure be wished sometimes to have been a little more popular and familiar in him; but he knew what he had to do best himself.

Thus by the way I thought to note, for that there was once an honest citizen, and to me not unknown, which having in himself a certain conflict of conscience, came to his door for counsel, but being abashed at his austere behaviour durst not come in, but departed, seeking remedy of his troubled mind at other men's hands, which he afterwards by the help of Almighty God did find and obtain. Therefore, in my judgment, such as are appointed and made governors over the flock of Christ, to teach and instruct them, ought so to frame their life, manners, countenance, and external behaviour, as neither they shew themselves too familiar and light, whereby to be brought into contempt, nor on the other side again, that they appear more lofty and rigorous, than appertaineth to the edifying of the simple flock of Christ. Nevertheless, as every man hath his peculiar gift wrought in him by nature, so this disposition of fatherly gravity in this man neither was excessive, neither did he bear that personage which was in him without great consideration. For it seemed to him peradventure, that this licentious and unbridled life of the common sort ought to be chastened, not only

with words and discipline, but also with the grave and severe countenance of good men.

After he had thus practised himself in this popular and common kind of preaching, at length, and that not without the great profit of many, he was called to preach before the King's Majesty, and soon after made Bishop of Gloucester by the King's commandment. In that office he continued two years, and behaved himself so well, that his very enemies (except it were for his good doings, and sharp correcting of sin) could find no fault with him : and after that he was also made Bishop of Worcester.

But I cannot tell what sinister and unlucky contention concerning the ordering and consecration of bishops, and of their apparel, with such other like trifles, began to disturb the good and lucky beginning of this godly Bishop. For notwithstanding that godly reformation of religion that began in the church of England, besides other ceremonies more ambitious than profitable, or tending to edification, they used to wear such garments and apparel as the popish bishops were wont to do: first, a chymere, and under that a white rochet; then a mathematical cap with four angles, dividing the whole world in four parts. These trifles, tending, as he thought, more to superstition than otherwise, as he could never abide, so in no wise could he be persuaded to wear them. For this cause he made supplication to the King's Majesty, most humbly desiring his Highness, either to discharge him of the bishopric, or else to dispense with him for such ceremonial orders. Whose petition the King granted immediately, writing his letter to the Archbishop after this tenour:

The King's Letters or Grant for the Dispensation of John Hooper, elected Bishop of Gloucester, written to the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Bishops.

“ Right reverend father, and right trusty and well beloved, we greet you well. Whereas we, by the advice of our council, have called and chosen our right well beloved and well worthy Master John Hooper, professor of divinity, to be our Bishop of Gloucester, as well for his great knowledge, deep judgment, and long study both in the Scriptures and profane learning, as also for his good discretion, ready utterance, and honest life for that kind of vocation: to the intent all our loving subjects, which are in his said charge, and elsewhere, might by his sound and true doctrine learn the better their duty towards God, their obedience towards us, and love towards their neighbours: from consecrating of whom we understand you do stay, because he would have you omit and let pass certain rites and ceremonies offensive to his conscience, whereby ye think ye should fall in premunity of laws; we have thought good, by the advice aforesaid, to dispense and discharge you of all manner of dangers, penalties, and forfeitures you should run and be in any manner of way, by omitting any of the same. And these our letters shall be your sufficient warrant and discharge thereof.

“ Given under our signet at our castle of Windsor, the 5th of August, the fourth year of our reign.

“ *Ed. Somerset.* “ *W. Paget.*

“ *W. Wiltshire.* “ *An. Wingfield.*

“ *W. North.* “ *N. Wooton.*”

Besides this letter of the King, also the Earl of Warwick (which was afterwards Duke of Northum-

berland) adjoined his letter to the foresaid Archbishop of Canterbury to this purpose and effect, that Master Hooper might not be burdened with the oath then used commonly in the consecration of bishops, which was against his conscience, as by the purport of the letter here is to be seen, as followeth :

“ After my most hearty commendation to your Grace, these may be to desire the same, that in such reasonable things, wherein this bearer, my Lord elect of Gloucester, craveth to be born withal at your hands, you would vouchsafe to shew him your Grace's favour, the rather at this my instant: which thing partly I have taken in hand by the King's Majesty's own motion. The matter is weighed by his Highness, none other but that your Grace may freely condescend unto. The principal cause is, that you would not charge this said bearer with an oath burdenous to his conscience. And so for lack of time I commit your Grace to tuition of Almighty God. From Westminster the 23d of July 1550.

“ Your Grace's most assured loving friend,
“ JOHN WARWICK.”

Both this grant of the King, and also the Earl's letters aforesaid notwithstanding, the Bishop still stood earnestly in the defence of the aforesaid ceremonies, saying, it was but a small matter, and that the fault was in the abuse of the things, and not in the things themselves: adding moreover, that he ought not to be stubborn in so slight a matter, and that his wilfulness therein was not to be suffered.

To be short, while both parties thus contended about this matter more than reason would approve, in the mean time occasion was given, as to the true Christians to lament, so to the adversaries to rejoice. In conclusion, this theological contention came to this end, that the bishops having the upper

hand, Master Hooper was fain to agree to this condition, that sometimes he should in his sermon shew himself apparelled as the other bishops were. Wherefore, appointed to preach before the King, as a new player in a strange apparel, he cometh forth on the stage. His upper garment was a long scarlet chymere down to the foot, and under that a white linen rochet that covered all his shoulders. Upon his head he had a geometrical, that is, a four squared cap, albeit that his head was round. What cause of shame the strangeness hereof was that day to that good preacher, every man may easily judge. But this private contumely and reproach in respect of the public profit of the church, which he only sought, he bare and suffered patiently. And I would to God in like manner, they which took upon them the other part of that tragedy, had yielded their private cause, whatsoever it was, to the public concord and edifying of the church: for no man in all the city was one hair the better for that hot contention.

I will name nobody, partly for that his oppugners being afterwards joined in the most sure bond of friendship with him, in one and for one cause suffered martyrdom; and partly that I commonly use, according to my accustomed manner, to keep my pen from presumptuous judging of any person: yet I thought to note the thing for this consideration, to admonish the reader hereby how wholesome and necessary the cross of Christ is some time in the church of Christ, as by the sequel hereof did afterward appear. For as in a civil governance and commonwealth, nothing is more occasion of war, than overmuch peace: so in the church and among churchmen, as nothing is more pernicious than too much quietness, so nothing more ceaseth private contentions oftentimes rising amongst them, than the public cross of persecution.

Furthermore, so I persuaded myself, the same not to be unexpedient, to have extant such examples of holy and blessed men. For if it do not a little appertain to our public consolation and comfort, when we read in the Scriptures of the foul dissensions between Paul and Barnabas; of the fall of Peter, and of David's murder and adultery: why may or should it not be as well profitable for our posterity, to hear and know the falls of these godly martyrs, whereby we may the less despair in our infirmities, considering the same or greater infirmities to reign in the holy saints of God, both prophets, apostles, and martyrs?

And thus by the way thou hast heard, good reader, hitherto the weakness of those good men, plainly and simply, as the truth was, declared unto thee, to the end their fall may minister occasion to us either of eschewing the like, or else to take heart and comfort in the like fall and frailness of ours. Now again on the other part it remaineth to record, after the foresaid discord, the godly reconciliations of these good men in time of persecution, who afterward, being in prison for the truth's sake, reconciled themselves again with most godly agreement, as appeareth by this letter sent by Bishop Ridley to the said Bishop of Gloucester. The copy whereof, as it was written with his own hand in Latin, hereafter followeth, translated into English.

To my dear Brother and reverend Fellow-elder in Christ, JOHN HOOPER, Grace and Peace.

“ My dearly beloved brother and fellow-elder, whom I reverence in the Lord, pardon me, I beseech you, that hitherto, since your captivity and mine, I have not saluted you by letters: whereas I do indeed confess, I have received from you (such was your gentleness) two letters at sundry times:

but yet at such times as I could not be suffered to write unto you again; or if I might, yet was I in doubt how my letters might safely come into your hands. But now, my dear brother, forasmuch as I understand by your works, which I have but superficially seen, that we thoroughly agree and wholly consent together in those things which are the grounds and substantial points of our religion, against the which the world doth so furiously rage in these our days, however in time past in certain by matters and circumstances of religion, your wisdom and my simplicity (I grant) hath a little jarred, each of us following the abundance of his own sense and judgment; now, I say, be you assured, that even with my whole heart, God is my witness, in the bowels of Christ I love you in the truth, and for the truth sake, which abideth in us, and as I am persuaded shall, by the grace of God, abide in us for evermore.

“And because the world, as I perceive, brother, ceaseth not to play his pageant, and busily conspireth against Christ our Saviour, with all possible force and power, exalting high things against the knowledge of God, let us join hands together in Christ, and if we cannot overthrow, yet to our power, and as much as in us lieth, let us shake those high altitudes, not with carnal, but with spiritual weapons: and withal, brother, let us prepare ourselves to the day of our dissolution, by the which, after the short time of this bodily affliction, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall triumph together with him in eternal glory.

“I pray you, brother, salute in my name your revered fellow-prisoner, and venerable father, D. C. by whom, since the first day that I heard of his most godly and fatherly constancy, in confessing the truth of the Gospel, I have conceived great consolation and joy in the Lord. For the integrity and upright-

ness of that man, his gratitude and innocency, all England, I think, hath known long ago. Blessed be God therefore, which in such abundance of iniquity and decay of all godliness, hath given unto us, in his revered old age, such a witness for the truth of his Gospel. Miserable and hard-hearted is he, whom the godliness and constant confession of so worthy, so grave, and innocent a man, will not move to acknowledge and confess the truth of God.

“ I do not now, brother, require you to write any thing to me again : for I stand much in fear, lest your letters should be intercepted before they can come to my hands. Nevertheless knowing you, that it shall be to me great joy to hear of your constancy and fortitude in the Lord's quarrel. And albeit I have not hitherto written unto you, yet have I twice, as I could, sent unto you my mind touching the matter which in your letters you required to know. Neither can I yet, brother, be otherwise persuaded : I see, methinks, so many perils, whereby I am earnestly moved to counsel you not to hasten the publishing of your works, especially under the title of your own name. For I fear greatly lest by this occasion both your mouth should be stopped hereafter, and all things taken away from the rest of the prisoners, whereby otherwise, if it so pleased God, they may be able to do good to many. Farewell in the Lord, my dear brother ; and if there be any more in prison with you for Christ's cause, I beseech you, as you may, salute them in my name. To whose prayers I do most humbly and heartily commend myself and my fellow-prisoners and captives in the Lord. And yet once again, and for ever in Christ, my most dear brother, farewell.

“ N. RIDLEY.”

Master Hooper, after all these tumults and vexations sustained about his investing and priestly vestures, at length entered into his diocese, did there employ his time, which the Lord lent him under King Edward's reign, with such diligence, as may be a spectacle to all bishops, which shall ever hereafter succeed him; not only in that place, but in whatsoever diocese through the whole realm of England: so careful was he in his cure, that he left neither pains untaken, nor ways unsought, how to train up the flock of Christ in the true word of salvation, continually labouring in the same. Other men commonly are won, for lucre or promotions, to aspire to bishoprics, some hunting for them, some purchasing or buying of them, as men used to purchase lordships, and when they have them are loth to leave them, and thereupon also loth to commit that thing by worldly laws, whereby to lose them.

To this sort of men Master Hooper was clean contrary, who abhorred nothing more than gain, labouring always to save and preserve the souls of his flock. Who being bishop of two dioceses, so ruled and guided either of them, and both together, as though he had in charge but one family. No father in his household, no gardener in his garden, nor husbandman in his vineyard, was more or better occupied, than he in his diocese amongst his flock, going about his towns and villages in teaching and preaching to the people there.

That time that he had to spare from preaching, he bestowed either in hearing public causes, or else in private study, prayer, and visiting of schools: to which his continual doctrine he adjoined due and discreet correction, not so much severe to any, as to them which for abundance of riches, and wealthy state, thought they might do what they listed. And doubtless he spared no kind of people, but was in-

different to all men, as well rich as poor, to the great shame of no small number of men now-a-days. Whereof many we see so addicted to the pleasing of great and rich men, that in the mean time they have no regard to the meaner sort of poor people, whom Christ hath bought as dearly as the other.

But now again we will return our talk to Master Hooper, all whose life in fine was such, that to the church and all churchmen it might be a light and example, to the rest a perpetual lesson and sermon. Finally, how virtuous and good a bishop he was, ye may conceive and know evidently by this ; that even as he was hated of none but of them which were evil, so yet the worst of them all could not reprove his life in any one jot.

I have now declared his usage and behaviour abroad in public affairs of the church: and certainly there appeared in him at home no less example of a worthy prelate's life. For although he bestowed and converted the most part of his care upon the public flock and congregation of Christ, for the which also he spent his blood: yet nevertheless there lacked no provision in him, to bring up his own children in learning and good manners ; insomuch that ye could not discern whether he deserved more praise for his fatherly usage at home, or for his bishopric doings abroad. For every where he kept one religion in one uniform doctrine and integrity. So that if you entered into the bishop's palace, you would suppose yourself to have entered into some church or temple. In every corner thereof there was some smell of virtue, good example, honest conversation, and reading of holy Scriptures. There was not to be seen in his house any courtly rioting or idleness: no pomp at all, no dishonest word, no swearing could there be heard.

As for the revenues of both his bishoprics, al-

though they did not greatly exceed, as the matter was handled, yet if any thing surmounted thereof, he pursed nothing, but bestowed it in hospitality. Twice I was, as I remember, in his house in Worcester, where in his common hall I saw a table spread with good store of meat, and beset full of beggars and poor folk: and I asked his servants what this meant, they told me that every day their lord and master's manner was, to have customary to dinner a certain number of poor folk of the said city by course, who were served by four at a mess, with whole and wholesome meats: and when they were served (before examined by him or his deputies of the Lord's prayer, the articles of their faith, and ten commandments) then he himself sat down to dinner, and not before.

After this sort and manner Master Hooper executed the office of a most careful and vigilant prelate, by the space of two years and more, so long as the state of religion in King Edward's time did safely flourish and take place: and would God that all other bishops would use the like diligence, care, and observance of their function. After this, King Edward being dead, and Mary being crowned Queen of England, religion being subverted and changed, this good Bishop was one of the first that was sent for by a pursuivant to be at London, and that for two causes.

First, to answer to Dr. Heath then appointed bishop of that diocese, who was before in King Edward's days deprived thereof for papistry.

Secondarily, to render account to Doctor Bonner Bishop of London, for that he in King Edward's time was one of his accusers, in that he shewed himself not conformable to such ordinances as were prescribed to him by the King and his council, openly at Paul's cross. And although the said Master Hooper was not ignorant of the evils that should happen towards him (for he was admonished of certain of his friends

to get him away, and shift for himself), yet he would not prevent them, but tarried still, saying: "Once I did flee, and took me to my feet, but now, because I am called to this place and vocation, I am thoroughly persuaded to tarry, and to live and die with my sheep."

And when at the day of his appearance, which was the first of September, he was come to London, before he could come to the aforesaid Doctors Heath and Bonner, he was intercepted, and commanded violently against his will to appear before the Queen and her council, to answer to certain bonds and obligations, wherein they said he was bound unto her. And when he came before them, Winchester by and by received him very opprobriously, and railing and rating of him, accused him of irreligion. He again freely and boldly told his tale, and cleared himself. But in fine it came to this conclusion, that by them he was commanded to prison (it being declared unto him at his departure, that the cause of his imprisonment was only for certain sums of money, for the which he was indebted to the Queen, and not for religion). This how false and untrue it was, shall hereafter in this place more plainly appear.

The next year, being 1554, the 19th of March, he was called again to appear before Winchester and other the Queen's commissioners: where what for the Bishop, and what for the unruly multitude, when he could not be permitted to plead his cause, he was deprived of his bishopric. Which how, and in what order it was done, here now following is to be seen by the testimony and report of one, which being present at the doing, committed the same to writing.

A Letter or Report of a certain godly Man, declaring the Order of Master HOOPER's Deprivation from his Bishopric, Anno 1554, March 19.

Forasmuch as a rumour is spread abroad of the talk

had at my Lord Chancellor's, between him with other commissioners there appointed, and Master Hooper, clean contrary to the verity and truth thereof indeed, and therefore to be judged rather to be risen of malice, for the discrediting of the truth by false suggestions, and evil reports; than otherwise: I thought it my duty, being present thereat myself, in writing to set forth the whole effect of the same: partly that the verity thereof may be known to the doubtful people, and partly to advertise them, how uncharitably Master Hooper was handled at their hands, which with all humility used himself towards them, desiring that with patience he might have been permitted to speak, assuring all men, that where I stood in a doubt, which of these two religions to have credited, either that set forth by the King's Majesty, that dead is, or else that now maintained by the Queen's Majesty, their unreverend behaviour towards Master Hooper doth move me the rather to credit his doctrine, than that which they with railing and cruel words defended, considering that Christ was so handled before. And that this, which I have written here, was the effect of their talk, as I acknowledged it to be true myself: so I appeal to all the hearers' consciences, that were there present (so they put affection away) for the witness of the same.

The Bishop of Winchester, of London, of Durham, of Landaff, of Chichester, sat as Commissioners.

Lord Chancellor.

At Master Hooper's coming in, the Lord Chancellor asked whether he was married.

Hooper. Yea, my Lord, and will not be unmarried, till death unmarry me.

Durham. That is matter enough to deprive you.

Hooper. That it is not, my Lord, except ye do against the law.

The matter concerning marriage was no more talked of then, for a great space: but as well the commissioners, as such as stood by, began to make such outcries, and laughed, and used such gestures as was unseemly for the place, and for such a matter.

The Bishop of Chichester, Dr. Day, called Master Hooper hypocrite, with vehement words and scornful countenance. Bishop Toustal called him beast; so did Smith, one of the clerks of the council, and divers other that stood by. At length the Bishop of Winchester said, that all men might live chaste that would, and brought in this text, Matt. xix. 12.

Master Hooper said, that text proved not that all men could live chaste, but such only to whom it was given; and read that which goeth before in the text. But there was a clamour and cry, mocking and scorning, with calling him beast, that the text could not be examined. Then Master Hooper said, that it did appear by the old canons, that marriages were not forbidden unto priests, and named the decrees. But the Bishop of Winchester sent for another part, namely, the Clementines, or the Extravagants. But Bishop Hooper said, that book was not it which he named.

Then cried out the Bishop of Winchester, and said, "You shall not have any other, until ye be judged by this." And then began such a noise, tumult, and speaking together of a great many that favoured not the cause, that nothing was done, nor spoken orderly, nor charitably. Afterward Judge Morgan began to rail at Master Hooper a long time, with many opprobrious and foul words of his doings at Gloucester, in punishing of men, and said, there was never such a tyrant as he was. After that, Dr. Day, Bishop of Chichester, said, that the council of Ancyra, which was before the council of Nice, was against the marriage of priests.

Then cried out my Lord Chancellor, and many with him, that Master Hooper had never read the councils.

"Yes, my Lord," quoth Master Hooper, "and my Lord of Chichester, Dr. Day, knoweth, that the great council of Nice, by the means of one Paphnutius, decreed that no minister should be separated from his wife." But such clamours and cries were used, that the council of Nice was not seen.

After this long brutish talk, Tonstal, Bishop of Durham, asked Master Hooper whether he believed the corporal presence in the sacrament. And Master Hooper said plainly, that there was none such, neither did he believe any such thing.

Then would the Bishop of Durham have read out of a book, for his purpose belike (what book it was I cannot tell): but there was such a noise and confused talk on every side, that he did not read it. Then asked Winchester of Master Hooper, what authority moved him not to believe the corporal presence? He said, the authority of God's word, and alleged this text, "Whom heaven must hold until the latter day."

Then the Bishop of Winchester would have made that text have served nothing for his purpose: and he said, he might be in heaven, and in the sacrament also.

Master Hooper would have said more to have opened the text, but all men that stood next about the Bishop, allowed so his saying with clamours and cries, that Master Hooper was not permitted to say any more against the Bishop. Whereupon they bade the notaries write that he was married, and said, that he would not go from his wife, and that he believed not the corporal presence in the sacrament, wherefore he was worthy to be deprived of his bishopric.

This is the truth of the matter (as far as I can

truly remember) of the confused and troublesome talk that was between them; and, except it were hasty and uncharitable words, this is the whole matter of their talk at that time.

The true Report of Master HOOVER's Entertainment in the Fleet, written with his own Hand, the seventh of January 1554.

The first of September 1553, I was committed unto the Fleet from Richmond, to have the liberty of the prison: and within six days after I paid for my liberty five pounds sterling to the Warden's fees: who, immediately upon the payment thereof, complained unto Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and so was I committed to close prison one quarter of a year, in the tower chamber of the Fleet, and used very extremely. Then by the means of a good gentleman, I had liberty to come down to dinner and supper, not suffered to speak to any of my friends: but as soon as dinner and supper was done, to repair to my chamber again. Notwithstanding, whilst I came down thus to dinner and supper, the Warden and his wife picked quarrels with me, and they complained untruly of me to their great friend the Bishop of Winchester.

After one quarter of a year and somewhat more, Babington, the Warden, and his wife, fell out with me for the wicked mass, and thereupon the Warden resorted to the Bishop of Winchester, and obtained to put me into the wards, where I have continued a long time, having nothing appointed to me for my bed, but a little pad of straw, and a rotten covering, with a tick and a few feathers therein, the chamber being vile and stinking, until by God's means good people sent me bedding to lie in. Of the one side of which prison is the sink and filth of the house,

and on the other side the tower ditch, so that the stench of the house hath infected me with sundry diseases.

During which time I have been sick, and the doors, bars, hasps, and chains being all closed, and made fast upon me, I have mourned, called, and cried for help. But the Warden, when he hath known me many times ready to die, and when the poor men of the wards have called to help me, hath commanded the doors to be kept fast, and charged that none of his men should come at me, saying, "Let him alone, it were a good riddance of him." And amongst many other times, he did thus the 18th of October 1553, as many can witness.

I paid always like a baron to the said Warden, as well in fees, as for my board, which was 20 shillings a week, besides my man's table, until I was wrongfully deprived of my bishopric, and since that I have paid him as the best gentleman doth in his house; yet hath he used me worse, and more vilely than the veriest slave that ever came to the hall commons.

The said Warden hath also imprisoned my man, William Downton, and stripped him of all his clothes to search for letters, and could find none but only a little remembrance of good people's names, that gave me their alms to relieve me in prison; and to undo them also the said Warden delivered the same bill unto the said Stephen Gardiner, God's enemy and mine.

I have suffered imprisonment almost eighteen months, my good living, friends, and comforts taken from me; the Queen owing me by just account 80 pounds or more. She hath put me in prison, and giveth nothing to find me, neither is there suffered any to come to me, whereby I might have relief. I am with a wicked man and woman, so that I see no remedy (saving God's help), but I shall be

cast away in prison before I come to judgment. But I commit my just cause to God, whose will be done, whether it be by life or death.

Thus much wrote he himself of this matter.

Another Examination of Master HOOPER.

The 22d of January following, 1555, Babington, the Warden of the Fleet, was commanded to bring Master Hooper before the Bishop of Winchester, with other bishops and commissioners, at the said Winchester's house, at St. Mary Overy's, where in effect thus much was done.

The Bishop of Winchester, in the name of himself and the rest, moved Master Hooper earnestly to forsake the evil and corrupt doctrine (as he termed it) preached in the days of King Edward the Sixth, and to return to the unity of the catholic church, and to acknowledge the Pope's Holiness to be head of the same church, according to the determination of the whole Parliament, promising, that as he himself, with other his brethren, had received the Pope's blessing, and the Queen's mercy; even so mercy was ready to be shewn to him and others, if he would arise with them, and condescend to the Pope's Holiness.

Master Hooper answered, that forasmuch as the Pope taught doctrine altogether contrary to the doctrine of Christ, he was not worthy to be accounted a member of Christ's church, much less to be head thereof, wherefore he would in no wise condescend to any such usurped jurisdiction, neither esteemed he the church, whereof they called him head, to be the catholic church of Christ: for the church only heareth her spouse Christ, and flieth the strangers. "Howbeit (saith he) if in anypoint, to me unknown, I have offended the Queen's Majesty, I shall most humbly submit myself to her mercy, if mercy may

be had with safety of conscience, and without the displeasure of God."

Answer was made, that the Queen would shew no mercy to the Pope's enemies. Whereupon Babington was commanded to bring him to the Fleet again : who did so, and shifted him from his former chamber into another, near unto the Warden's own chamber, where he remained six days : and in the mean time, his former chamber was searched by D. Marten and others, for writings and books, which Master Hooper was thought to have made, but none was found.

*Here followeth another Examination of Master
HOOPER.*

The 28th of January, Winchester and other the commissioners sat in judgment at St. Mary's, where Master Hooper appeared before them at afternoon again, and there, after much reasoning and disputation to and fro, he was commanded aside, till Master Rogers (which was then come) had been likewise examined. Examinations being ended, the two Sheriffs of London were commanded, about four of the clock, to carry them to the compter in Southwark, there to remain till the morrow at nine o'clock, to see whether they would relent and come again to their catholic church. So Master Hooper went before with one of the Sheriffs, and Master Rogers came after with the other, and being out of the church door, Master Hooper looked back, and stayed a little till Master Rogers drew near, unto whom he said, "Come, brother Rogers, must we two take this matter first in hand, and begin to fry these faggots?"—"Yea, Sir," said Master Rogers, "by God's grace."—"Doubt not," said Master Hooper, "but God will give strength." So going forwards, there was such a press

of people in the streets, which rejoiced at their constancy, that they had much ado to pass.

By the way the Sheriff said to Master Hooper, "I wonder that ye were so hasty and quick with my Lord Chancellor, and did use no more patience." He answered, "Master Sheriff, I was nothing at all impatient, although I was earnest in my Master's cause, and it standeth me so in hand, for it goeth upon life and death, not the life and death of this world only, but also of the world to come." Then were they committed to the keeper of the compter, and appointed to several chambers, with commandment that they should not be suffered to speak one with another, neither yet any other permitted to come at them that night.

Upon the next day following, the 29th of January, at the hour appointed, they were brought again by the Sheriffs before the said Bishop and commissioners in the church, where they were the day before. And after long and earnest talk, when they perceived that Master Hooper would by no means condescend unto them, they condemned him to be degraded, and read unto him his condemnation. That done, Master Rogers was brought before them, and in like manner entreated, and so they delivered both of them to the secular power, the two Sheriffs of London, who were willed to carry them to the Clink, a prison not far from the Bishop of Winchester's house, and there to remain till night.

When it was dark, Master Hooper was led by one of the Sheriffs, with many bills and weapons, first through the Bishop of Winchester's house, and so over London bridge, through the city to Newgate. And by the way some of the sergeants were willed to go before, and put out the costermongers' candles, who used to sit with lights in the streets: either fearing of likelihood that the people would have

made some attempt to have taken him away from them by force, if they had seen him go to that prison ; or else, being burdened with an evil conscience, they thought darkness to be a most fit season for such a business.

But notwithstanding this device, the people having some foreknowledge of his coming, many of them came forth of their doors with lights, and saluted him, praising God for his constancy in the true doctrine which he had taught them, and desiring God to strengthen him in the same to the end. Master Hooper passed by, and required the people to make their earnest prayers to God for him, and so went through Cheapside to the place appointed, and was delivered as close prisoner to the keeper of Newgate, where he remained six days, nobody being permitted to come to him, or to talk with him, saving his keepers, and such as should be appointed thereto.

During this time Bonner, Bishop of London, and others at his appointment, as Feckenham, Chedsey, and Harpsfield, &c. resorted divers times unto him, to assay if by any means they could persuade him to relent, and become a member of their antichristian church. All the ways they could devise, they attempted. For besides the disputations and allegations of testimonies of the Scriptures, and of ancient writers wrested to a wrong sense, according to their accustomed manner, they used also all outward gentleness and significations of friendship, with great many proofs and promises of worldly commodities, not omitting also most grievous threatenings, if with gentleness they could not prevail ; but they found him always the same man, stedfast and immovable. When they perceived that they could by no means reclaim him to their purpose, with such persuasions and offers as they used for his conversion, then went they about by false rumours and reports of recant-

ations (for it is well known, that they and their servants did spread it first abroad), to bring him and the doctrine of Christ which he professed, out of credit with the people. So the report being a little spread abroad, and believed of some of the weaker sort, by reason of the often resort of the Bishop of London and others, it increased more, and at the last came to Master Hooper's ears. Wherewith he was not a little grieved, that the people should give so light credit unto false rumours, having so simple a ground, as it may appear by a letter which he wrote upon that occasion, the copy whereof followeth.

A Letter of Master HOOPER for the Stopping of certain false Rumours spread abroad of his Recantation.

“ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all them that unfeignedly look for the coming of our Saviour Christ. Amen.

“ Dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, and my fellow-prisoners for the cause of God's Gospel, I do much rejoice and give thanks unto God for you for your constancy and perseverance in affliction, unto whom I wish continuance unto the end. And as I do rejoice in your faith and constancy in afflictions that be in prison, even so do I mourn and lament to hear of dear brethren that yet have felt such dangers for God's truth, as we have, and do feel, and be daily like to suffer more, yea, the very extreme and vile death of the fire: yet such is the report abroad (as I am credibly informed), that I John Hooper, a condemned man for the cause of Christ, should now after sentence of death (being in Newgate prisoner, and looking daily for execution) recant and abjure that which heretofore I have preached. And this talk ariseth of this, that the Bishop of London and his chaplains resort unto me. Doubtless, if our

brethren were as godly as I could wish them, they would think, that in case I did refuse to talk with them, they might have just reason to say, that I were unlearned, and durst not speak with learned men, or else proud, and disdained to speak with them. Therefore, to avoid just suspicion of both, I have, and do daily speak with them when they come, not doubting but that they reported that I am neither proud, nor unlearned. And I would wish all men to do as I do in this point. For I fear not their arguments, neither is death terrible unto me, praying you make true report of the same, as occasion shall serve; and that I am more confirmed in the truth which I have preached heretofore, by their coming.

“Therefore, ye that may send to the weak brethren, pray that they trouble me not with such reports of recantations as they do. For I have hitherto left all things of the world, and suffered great pains and imprisonment, and I thank God I am as ready to suffer death, as mortal man may be. It were better for them to pray for us, than to credit or report such rumours that be untrue. We have enemies enough of such as know not God truly. But yet the false report of weak brethren is a double cross. I wish you eternal salvation in Jesus Christ, and also require your continual prayers, that He that hath begun in us, may continue it to the end.

“I have taught the truth with my tongue, and with my pen heretofore, and hereafter shortly will confirm the same by God’s grace with my blood. Forth of Newgate the 2d of February, anno 1554.

“Your brother in Christ,

“JOHN HOOPER.”

Here followeth the form and manner used in the degrading of Bishop Hooper.

The fourth day of February, the year abovementioned.

tioned, in the chapel in Newgate, the Bishop of London there sitting with his notary and certain other witnesses, came Alexander Andrew the gaoler, bringing with him Master Hooper and Master Rogers, being condemned before by the Chancellor: where the said Bishop of London at the request of the foresaid Winchester, proceeded to the degradation of the parties above mentioned, Master Hooper and Master Rogers, after this form and manner: first, he put upon them all the vestures and ornaments belonging to a priest, with all other things to the same order appertaining, as though (being revested) they should solemnly execute their office, the Bishop beginning to pluck off, first the uttermost vesture, and so by degrees coming to the lowest vesture. And so being stript and deposed, he deprived them of all order, benefit, and privilege belonging to the clergy: and consequently that being done, pronounced, decreed, and declared, the said parties so degraded to be given personally to the secular power, the Sheriffs being for that year, Master Davy Woodroof, and Master William Chester: who, receiving first the said Master Rogers at the hands of the Bishop, had him away with them, bringing him to the place of execution, where he suffered. The witnesses there present were Master Harpsfield, Archdeacon of London; Robert Cosin, and Robert Willerton, Canons of Paul's; Thomas Montague, George How, Clerks; Tristram Swadock, and Richard Clunney Sumner, &c.

The same Monday at night, being the 4th of February, his keeper gave him an inkling that he should be sent to Gloucester to suffer death, whereof he rejoiced very much, lifting up his eyes and hands unto heaven, and praising God that he saw it good to send him amongst the people, over whom he was pastor, there to confirm with his death the truth which he had before taught them; not doubting but

the Lord would give him strength to perform the same to his glory: and immediately he sent to his servant's house for his boots, spurs, and cloak, that he might be in a readiness to ride when he should be called.

The next day following, about four of the clock in the morning before day, the keeper with others came to him and searched him, and the bed wherein he lay, to see if he had written any thing, and then he was led by the Sheriffs of London and other their officers forth of Newgate to a place appointed, not far from St. Dunstan's church in Fleet Street, where six of the Queen's guard were appointed to receive him, and carry him to Glocester, there to be delivered unto the Sheriffs, who with the Lord Shandeys, Master Wikes, and other commissioners, were appointed to see execution done. The which guard brought him to the Angel, where he broke his fast with them, eating his meat at that time more liberally than he had used to do a good while before. About the break of the day he went to the horse, and leapt cheerfully on horseback without help, having a hood upon his head under his hat that he should not be known, and so took his journey joyfully towards Glocester, and always by the way the guard learned of him where he was accustomed to bait or lodge, and ever carried him to another inn.

Upon the Thursday following, he came to a town in his diocese called Cirencester, fifteen miles from Glocester, about eleven o'clock, and there dined at a woman's house which had always hated the truth, and spoken all the evil she could of Master Hooper. This woman, perceiving the cause of his coming, shewed him all the friendship she could, and lamented his case with tears, confessing that she before had often reported, that if he were put to the trial, he would not stand to his doctrine.

After dinner he rode forwards, and came to Gloucester about five of the clock, and a mile without the town was much people assembled, which cried and lamented his estate: insomuch that one of the guard rode post into the town, to require aid of the Mayor and Sheriffs, fearing lest he should have been taken from them. The officers and their retinue repaired to the gate with weapons, and commanded the people to keep their houses, &c. but there was no man that once gave any signification of any such rescue and violence. So was he lodged at one Ingram's house in Gloucester, and that night (as he had done all the way) he did eat his meat quietly, and slept his first sleep soundly, as it was reported by them of the guard and others. After his first sleep he continued all that night in prayer until the morning, and then he desired that he might go into the next chamber (for the guard were also in the chamber where he lay), that there being solitary he might pray and talk with God: so that the day, saving a little at meat, and where he talked at any time with such as the guard licensed to speak with him, he bestowed in prayer.

Amongst other that spake with him, Sir Anthony Kingston, Knight, was one, who seeming in times past his very friend, was then appointed by the Queen's letters to be one of the commissioners, to see execution done upon him. Master Kingston being brought into the chamber found him at his prayer: and as soon as he saw Master Hooper, he burst forth in tears. Master Hooper at the first blush knew him not. Then said Master Kingston, "Why, my Lord, do you not know me, an old friend of yours, Anthony Kingston?"

"Yes, Master Kingston, I do now know you well, and am glad to see you in health, and do praise God for the same."

"But I am sorry to see you in this case; for, as I

understand, you are come hither to die. But (alas!) consider that life is sweet, and death is bitter. Therefore, seeing life may be had, desire to live; for life hereafter may do good."

"Indeed it is true, Master Kingston, I am come hither to end this life, and to suffer death here, because I will not gainsay the former truth that I have therefore taught amongst you in this diocese, and elsewhere; and I thank you for your friendly counsel, although it be not so friendly as I could have wished it. True it is, Master Kingston, that death is bitter, and life is sweet: but (alas!) consider that death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is more sweet. Therefore for the desire and love I have to the one, and the terror and fear of the other; I do not so much regard this death, nor esteem this life, but have settled myself, through the strength of God's holy Spirit, patiently to pass through the torments and extremities of the fire now prepared for me, rather than to deny the truth of his word, desiring you and others, in the mean time, to commend me to God's mercy in your prayers."

"Well, my Lord, then I perceive there is no remedy, and therefore I will take my leave of you; and I thank God that ever I knew you, for God did appoint you to call me, being a lost child: and by your good instructions, where before I was both an adulterer and a fornicator, God hath brought me to the forsaking and detesting of the same."

"If you have had the grace so to do, I do highly praise God for it: and if ye have not, I pray God ye may have it, and that you may continually live in his fear."

After these and many other words, the one took leave of the other; Master Kingston with bitter tears, Master Hooper with tears also trickling down his cheeks. At which departure Master Hooper told

him, that all the troubles he had sustained in prison had not caused him to utter so much sorrow.

The same day in the afternoon, a blind boy, after long intercession made to the guard, obtained license to be brought unto Master Hooper's speech. The same boy not long afore had suffered imprisonment at Gloucester for confessing of the truth. Master Hooper, after he had examined him of his faith, and the cause of his imprisonment, beheld him stedfastly, and (the water appearing in his eyes) saith unto him: "Ah, poor boy, God hath taken from thee thy outward sight, for what consideration he best knoweth: but he hath given thee another sight much more precious: for he hath endued thy soul with the eye of knowledge and faith. God give thee grace continually to pray unto him, that thou lose not that sight, for then shouldst thou be blind both in body and soul."

After that another came to him, whom he knew to be a very Papist and a wicked man, which appeared to be sorry for Master Hooper's trouble, saying, "Sir, I am sorry to see you thus."

"To see me? why," said he, "art thou sorry?"

"To see you," saith the other, "in this case. For I hear say you are come hither to die, for the which I am sorry."

"Be sorry for thyself, man," said Master Hooper, "and lament thine own wickedness: for I am well, I thank God, and death to me for Christ's sake is welcome."

The same night he was committed by the guard, their commission being then expired, unto the custody of the Sheriffs of Gloucester. The name of the one was Jenkins, the other Bond, who with the Mayor and Aldermen repaired to Master Hooper's lodgings, and at the first meeting saluted him, and

took him by the hand. Unto whom Hooper spake on this manner :

“ Master Mayor, I give most hearty thanks to you, and to the rest of your brethren, that you have vouchsafed to take me a prisoner and a condemned man by the hand ; whereby to my rejoicing it is some deal apparent that your old love and friendship towards me is not altogether extinguished : and I trust also that all the things I have taught you in times past are not utterly forgotten, when I was here, by the good King that is dead, appointed to be your bishop and pastor. For which true and sincere doctrine, because I will not now account it falsehood and heresy, as many other men do, I am sent hither (as I am sure you know) by the Queen’s commandment, to die, and am come where I taught it, to confirm it with my blood. And now, Master Sheriffs, I understand by these good men, and my very friends (meaning the guards), at whose hands I have found so much favour and gentleness by the way hitherward, as a prisoner could reasonably require (for the which also I most heartily thank them), that I am committed to your custody, as unto them that must see me brought to-morrow to the place of execution. My request therefore to you shall be only, that there may be a quick fire, shortly to make an end, and in the mean time I will be as obedient to you, as yourselves would wish. If you think I do amiss in any thing, hold up your finger, and I have done. For I am not come hither as one enforced or compelled to die ; for it is well known I might have had my life with worldly gain ; but as one willing to offer and give my life for the truth, rather than to consent to the wicked papistical religion of the Bishop of Rome, received and set forth by the magistrates in England, to God’s high displeasure and dishonour ; and I trust

by God's grace to-morrow to die a faithful servant of God, and a true obedient subject to the Queen."

These and such-like words in effect used Master Hooper to the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Aldermen, whereat many of them mourned and lamented. Notwithstanding, the two Sheriffs went aside to consult, and were determined to have lodged him in the common gaol of the town called Northgate, if the guard had not made earnest intercession for him; who declaring at large how quietly, mildly, and patiently he behaved himself in the way, adding thereto, that any child might keep him well enough, and that they themselves would rather take pains to watch with him, than that he should be sent to the common prison: so it was determined at the length he should still remain in Robert Ingram's house; and the Sheriffs and the sergeants and other officers did appoint to watch with him that night themselves. His desire was, that he might go that night to bed betimes, saying, that he had many things to remember: and so did at five of the clock, and slept one sleep soundly, and bestowed the rest of the night in prayer. After he gat up in the morning, he desired that no man should be suffered to come into the chamber, that he might be solitary till the hour of execution.

About eight of the clock came Sir John Bridges, Lord Shandois, with a great band of men, Sir Anthony Kingston, Sir Edmund Bridges, and other commissioners appointed to see execution done. At nine of the clock Master Hooper was willed to prepare himself to be in readiness, for the time was at hand. Immediately he was brought down from his chamber by the Sheriffs, who were accompanied with bills and other weapons. When he saw the multitude of weapons, he spake to the Sheriffs on this wise: "Master Sheriffs (said he), I am no traitor,

neither need you to have made such a business to bring me to the place where I must suffer: for if ye had willed me, I would have gone alone to the stake, and have troubled none of you all."

Afterwards, looking upon the multitude of people that were assembled, being by estimation to the number of seven thousand (for it was market-day, and many also came to see his behaviour towards death), he spake unto those that were about him, saying, "Alas! why be these people assembled and come together? Peradventure, they think to hear something of me now, as they have in times past, but, alas! speech is prohibited me. Notwithstanding, the cause of my death is well known unto them. When I was appointed here to be their pastor, I preached unto them true and sincere doctrine, and that out of the word of God. Because I will not now account the same to be heresy and untruth, this kind of death is prepared for me."

So he went forward, led between the two Sheriffs (as it were a lamb to the slaughter), in a gown of his host's, his hat upon his head, and a staff in his hand to stay himself withal. For the grief of the sciatica, which he had taken in prison, caused him somewhat to halt. All the way, being straitly charged not to speak, he could not be perceived once to open his mouth, but beholding the people all the way, which mourned bitterly for him, he would sometimes lift up his eyes toward heaven, and look very cheerfully upon such as he knew: and he was never known, during the time of his being amongst them, to look with so cheerful and ruddy a countenance as he did at that present.

When he came to the place appointed where he should die, smiling he beheld the stake and preparation made for him, which was near unto the great elm-tree over against the college of priests, where he

was wont to preach. The place round about the houses and the boughs of the tree were replenished with people; and in the chamber over the college gate stood the priests of the college. Then kneeled he down (forasmuch as he could not be suffered to speak unto the people) to prayer, and beckoned six or seven times unto one whom he knew well, to hear the said prayer, to make report thereof in time to come (pouring tears upon his shoulders and in his bosom), who gave attentive ears unto the same: the which prayer he made upon the whole creed, wherein he continued the space of half an hour. Now after he was somewhat entered into his prayer, a box was brought and laid before him upon a stool, with his pardon (or at the least wise it was feigned to be his pardon) from the Queen, if he would turn. At the sight whereof he cried, "If you love my soul, away with it." The box being taken away, the Lord Shandois said, "Seeing there is no remedy, dispatch him quickly." Master Hooper said, "Good my Lord, I trust your Lordship will give me leave to make an end of my prayers."

Then said the Lord Shandois to Sir Edmund Bridges his son, which gave ear before to Master Hooper's prayer at his request: "Edmund, take heed that he do nothing else but pray: if he do, tell me, and I shall quickly dispatch him." While this talk was, there stepped one or two uncalled, which heard him speak these words following:

"Lord," said he, "I am hell, but thou art heaven; I am a swill and a sink of sin, but thou art a gracious God and a merciful Redeemer. Have mercy therefore upon me, most miserable and wretched offender, after thy great mercy, and according to thine inestimable goodness. Thou art ascended into heaven; receive me to be partaker of thy joys, where thou sittest in equal glory with thy Father. For

well thou knowest, Lord, wherefore I am come hither to suffer, and why the wicked do persecute this thy poor servant ; not for my sins and transgressions committed against thee, but because I will not allow their wicked doings, to the contaminating of thy blood, and to the denial of the knowledge of thy truth, wherewith it did please thee by thy holy Spirit to instruct me : the which with as much diligence as a poor wretch might (being thereto called) I have set forth thy glory. And well seest thou, my Lord and God, what terrible pains and cruel torments be prepared for thy creature : such, Lord, as without thy strength none is able to bear, or patiently to pass. But all things that are impossible with man, are possible with thee. Therefore strengthen me of thy goodness, that in the fire I break not the rule of patience ; or else assuage the terror of the pains, as shall seem most to thy glory."

As soon as the Mayor had espied these men which made report of the former words, they were commanded away, and could not be suffered to hear any more. Prayer being done, he prepared himself for the stake, and put off his host's gown, and delivered it to the Sheriffs, requiring them to see it restored unto the owner, and put off the rest of his gear, unto his doublet and hose, wherein he would have burned. But the Sheriffs would not permit that (such was their greediness), unto whose pleasures (good man) he very obediently submitted himself ; and his doublet, hose, and waistcoat were taken off. Then being in his shirt, he took a point from his hose himself, and trussed his shirt between his legs, where he had a pound of gunpowder in a bladder, and under each arm the like quantity delivered him by the guard. So desiring the people to say the Lord's prayer with him, and to pray for him (who performed

it with tears, during the time of his pains), he went up to the stake.

Now when he was at the stake, three irons, made to bind him to the stake, were brought ; one for his neck, another for his middle, and the third for his legs. But he refusing them, said, " Ye have no need thus to trouble yourselves. For I doubt not but God will give me strength sufficient to abide the extremity of the fire, without bands : notwithstanding, suspecting the frailty and weakness of the flesh, though I have assured confidence in God's strength, I am content ye do as ye shall think good."

So the hoop of iron, prepared for his middle, was brought, which being made somewhat too short (for his belly was swollen with imprisonment), he shrank and put in his belly with his hand, until it was fastened : and when they offered to have bound his neck and legs with the other two hoops of iron, he utterly refused them, and would have none, saying, " I am well assured I shall not trouble you."

Thus being ready, he looked upon the people, of whom he might be well seen (for he was both tall, and stood also on an high stool), and beheld round about him : and in every corner there was nothing to be seen but weeping and sorrowful people. Then lifting up his eyes and hands unto heaven, he prayed to himself. By and by he that was appointed to make the fire, came to him, and did ask him forgiveness. Of whom he asked " why he should forgive him, saying, that he knew never any offence he had committed against him."—" O! Sir," said the man, " I am appointed to make the fire."—" Therein," said Master Hooper, " thou dost nothing offend me ; God forgive thee thy sins, and do thine office, I pray thee." Then the reeds were cast up, and he received two bundles of them in his own hands, embraced them, kissed them, and put under either arm

one of them, and shewed with his hand how the rest should be bestowed, and pointed to the place where any did lack.

Anon commandment was given that the fire should be set to, and so it was: but because there was put to no fewer green fagots than two horses could carry upon their backs, it kindled not by and by, and was a pretty while also before it took the reeds upon the fagots. At length it burned about him, but the wind having strength in that place (it was also a lowering and cold morning), it blew the flames from him, so that he was in a manner no more but touched by the fire.

Within a space after, a few dry fagots were brought, and a new fire was kindled with fagots (for there were no more reeds), and that burnt at the nether parts, but had small power above, because of the wind, saving that it did burn his hair, and scorched his shin a little. In the time of which fire, even as at the first flame, he prayed, saying mildly and not very loud (but as one without pains), "O Jesus, the Son of David, have mercy upon me, and receive my soul." After the second was spent, he did wipe both his eyes with his hands, and beholding the people, he said with an indifferent loud voice, "For God's love (good people) let me have more fire." And all this while his nether parts did burn: for the fagots were so few, that the flames did not burn strongly at his upper parts.

The third fire was kindled within a while after, which was a more extreme than the other two; and then the bladders of gunpowder brake, which did him small good, they were so placed, and the wind had such power. In the which fire he prayed with somewhat a loud voice; "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me: Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And these were the last words he

was heard to utter. But when he was black in the mouth, and his tongue swollen, that he could not speak, yet his lips went till they were shrunk to the gums: and he knocked his breast with his hands, until one of his arms fell off, and then knocked with the other, until by renewing of the fire his strength was gone, and his hand did cleave fast in knocking to the iron upon his breast. So immediately, bowing forwards, he yielded up his spirit.

Thus was he three quarters of an hour or more in the fire. Even as a lamb, patiently he bore the extremity thereof, neither moving forwards nor backwards, nor to any side; but having his lower part burnt, and his vitals destroyed, he died as quietly as a child in his bed.

And now he reigns, as a blessed martyr, in ^{Heaven} the joys of heaven, prepared for the faithful in Christ, before the foundations of the world: for whose constancy all Christians are bound to praise God.



EPISTLES
OF
BISHOP HOOPER,
TO
DIVERS FRIENDS.



A Letter which Master HOOPER did write out of Prison to certain of his Friends.

THE grace of God be with you. Amen. I did write unto you of late, and told you what extremity the Parliament had concluded upon concerning religion, suppressing the truth, and setting forth the untruth, intending to cause all men by extremity to forswear themselves, and to take again, for the head of the church, him that is neither head nor member of it, but a very enemy, as the word of God and all ancient writers do record : and for lack of law and authority, they will use force and extremity, which have been the argument to defend the Pope and Popery, since this authority first began in the world. But now in the time of trial, to see whether we fear God or man, it was an easy thing to hold with Christ whiles the prince and world held with him : but now the world hateth him, it is the true trial who be his.

Wherefore in the name, and in the virtue, strength, and power of his holy Spirit, prepare yourselves in any case to adversity and constancy. Let us not run away when it is most time to fight ; remember none shall be crowned, but such as fight manfully : and he that endureth to the end shall be saved. Ye must now turn all your cogitations from the perils you see, and mark the felicity that followeth the peril, either victory in this world of your enemies, or else a surrender of this life to inherit the everlasting kingdom. Beware of beholding too much the felicity or misery of this world ; for the consideration and too earnest love or fear of either of them draweth from God.

Wherefore think with yourselves as touching the felicities of the world, it is good : but yet none other.

wise than it standeth with the favour of God. It is to be kept ; but so far forth, as by keeping of it we lose not God. It is good abiding and tarrying still among our friends here : but yet so, that we tarry not therewithal in God's displeasure, and hereafter dwell with devils in fire everlasting. There is nothing under God but may be kept, so that God, being above all things we have, be not lost.

Of adversity judge the same. Imprisonment is painful, but yet liberty upon evil conditions is more painful. The prisons stink : but yet not so much as sweet houses, where the fear and true honour of God lacketh. I must be alone and solitary. It were better so to be and have God with me, than to be in company with the wicked. Loss of goods is great : but loss of God's grace and favour is greater. I am a poor simple creature, and cannot tell how to answer before such a great sort of noble, learned, and wise men : it is better to make answer before the pomp and pride of wicked men, than to stand naked in the sight of all heaven and earth before the just God at the latter day. I shall die then by the hands of the cruel man : he is blessed that loseth this life full of miseries, and findeth the life of eternal joys. It is pain and grief to depart from God and friends : but yet not so much, as to depart from grace and heaven itself. Wherefore there is neither felicity nor adversity of this world, that can appear to be great, if it be weighed with the joys or pains in the world to come.

“ I can do no more, but pray for you ; do the same for me, for God's sake. For my part (I thank the heavenly Father), I have made my accounts, and appointed myself until the will of my heavenly Father : as he will, so will I by his grace. For God's sake, as soon as ye can, send my poor wife and children some letter from you, and my letter also which

I have sent of late to D. As it was told me, she never had letter from me since the coming of M. S. unto her : the more to blame the messengers, for I have written divers times. The Lord comfort them, and provide for them ; for I am able to do nothing in worldly things. She is a godly and wise woman. If my meaning hath been accomplished, she should have had necessary things : but what I mean, God can perform, to whom I commend both her and you all. I am a precious jewel now, and daintily kept, never so daintily : for neither mine own man, nor any of the servants of the house, may come to me, but my keeper alone : a simple rude man, God knoweth, but I am nothing careful thereof. Fare you well. The 21st of January 1555.

Yours bounden,
JOHN HOOVER.

A Letter of Master HOOVER to certain godly Professors and Lovers of the Truth, instructing them how to behave themselves in that woful Alteration and Change of Religion.

The grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you, my dear brethren, and with all those that unfeignedly love and embrace his holy Gospel. Amen.

It is told me that the wicked idol the mass is established again by a law, and passed in the Parliament-house. Learn the truth of it, I pray you, and what penalty is appointed in the act to such as speak against it : also whether there be any compulsion to constrain men to be at it ; the statute thoroughly known, such as be abroad and at liberty may provide for themselves, and avoid the danger the better. Doubtless there hath not been before our time such a Parliament as this is, that as many as were suspected

to be favourers of God's word, should be banished out of both Houses. But we must give God thanks for that truth he hath opened in the time of his blessed servant King Edward the Sixth, and pray unto him that we deny it not, nor dishonour it with idolatry; but that we may have strength and patience rather to die ten times, than to deny him once. Blessed shall we be, if ever God make us worthy of that honour to shed our blood for his name sake: and blessed then shall we think the parents which brought us into this world, that we should from this mortality be carried into immortality. If we follow the commandment of St. Paul, that saith, "If ye then be risen again with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," we shall neither depart from the vain transitory goods of this world, nor from this wretched and mortal life, with so great pains as others do.

Let us pray to our heavenly Father, that we may know and love his blessed will, and the glorious joy prepared for us in time to come, and that we may know and hate all things contrary to his blessed will, and also the pain prepared for the wicked in the world to come. There is no better way to be used in this troublesome time for your consolation, than many times to have assemblies together of such men and women as be of your religion in Christ, and there to talk and renew amongst yourselves the truth of your religion, to see what ye be by the word of God, and to remember what ye were before ye came to the knowledge thereof, to weigh and confer the dreams and false lies of the preachers, that now preach, with the word of God that retaineth all truth: and by such talk and familiar resorting together, ye shall the better find out all their lies that now go about to deceive you, and also both know and love the truth that God hath opened to us. It

is much requisite, that the members of Christ comfort one another, make prayers together, confer one with another; so shall ye be the stronger, and God's Spirit shall not be absent from you, but in the midst of you, to teach you, to comfort you, to make you wise in all godly things, patient in all adversity, and strong in all persecution.

Ye see how the congregation of the wicked, by helping one another, make their wicked religion and themselves strong against God's truth and his people. If ye may have some learned man, that can out of the Scriptures speak unto you of faith, and true honouring of God, also that can shew you the descent of Christ's church from the beginning of it until this day, that ye may perceive by the life of your forefathers these two things: the one, that Christ's words, which said that all his must suffer persecution and trouble in the world, be true; the other, that none of all his, before our time, escaped trouble; then shall ye perceive that it is but a folly for one that professeth Christ truly, to look for the love of the world.

Thus shall ye learn to bear trouble, and exercise your religion, and feel indeed that Christ's words be true, "In the world ye shall suffer persecution." And when ye feel your religion indeed, say, ye be no better than your forefathers; but be glad, that ye may be counted worthy soldiers for this war: and pray to God when ye come together, that he will use and order you and your doings in these three ends, which ye must take heed to: the first, that ye glorify God; the next, that ye edify the church and congregation; the third, that you profit your own souls.

In all your doings beware ye be not deceived. For although this time be not so bloody and tyrannous as the time of our forefathers, that could not

bear the name of Christ, without danger of life and goods; yet is our time more perilous both for body and soul. Therefore of us Christ saith, Think ye when the Son of man cometh, he shall find faith upon the earth? He saith not, Think ye he shall find any man or woman christened, and in name a Christian? But he spake of the faith that saveth the Christian man in Christ: and doubtless the scarcity of faith is now more (and will, I fear, increase) than it was in the time of the greatest tyrants that ever were; and no marvel why. Read the sixth chapter of St. John's Revelations, and ye shall perceive, amongst other things, that at the opening of the fourth seal came out a pale horse, and he that sat upon him was called Death, and hell followed him. This horse is the time wherein hypocrites and dissemblers entered into the church under the pretence of true religion, as monks, friars, nuns, massing-priests, with such others, that have killed more souls with heresy and superstition, than all the tyrants that ever killed bodies with fire, sword, or banishment, as it appeareth by his name that sitteth upon the horse, who is called Death: for all souls that leave Christ, and trust to these hypocrites, live to the devil in everlasting pain, as is declared by him that followeth the pale horse, which is hell.

These pretended and pale hypocrites have stirred the earthquakes, that is to wit, the princes of the world, against Christ's church, and have also darkened the sun, and made the moon bloody, and have caused the stars to fall from heaven, that is to say, have darkened with mists, and daily do darken (as ye hear by their sermons) the clear sun of God's most pure word: the moon, which be God's true preachers, which fetch only light at the sun of God's word, are turned into blood, prisons, and chains, that their light cannot shine unto the world as they would:

whereupon it cometh to pass, that the stars, that is to say, Christian people, fall from heaven, that is to wit, from God's most true word to hypocrisy, most devilish superstition and idolatry. Let some learned man shew you all the articles of your belief and monuments of Christian faith, from the time of Christ hitherto, and ye shall perceive that there was never mention of such articles as those hypocrites teach. God bless you, and pray for me as I do for you.

Out of the Fleet, by your brother in Christ,
JOHN HOOPER.

To Master FARRAR, Bishop of St. DAVID's, Doctor TAYLOR, Master BRADFORD, Master PHILPOT, Prisoners in the King's Bench in Southwark.

The grace of God be with you, Amen. I am advised by divers, as well such as love the truth, as also by such as yet be not come unto it, that ye and I shall be carried shortly to Cambridge, there to dispute for the faith, and for the religion of Christ (which is most true) that we have and do profess. I am (as I doubt not ye be) in Christ ready, not only to go to Cambridge, but also to suffer, by God's help, death itself in the maintenance thereof. Weston and his accomplices have obtained forth the commission already, and speedily (most like) he will put it in execution. Wherefore, dear brethren, I do advertise you of the thing before for divers causes. The one, to comfort you in the Lord, that the time draweth near and is at hand, that we shall testify before God's enemies God's truth. The next, that ye should prepare yourselves the better for it. The third, to shew you what way I think ourselves were best to use in this matter, and also to hear of every one of you your better advice, if mine be not good. Ye know such, as shall be censors and judges over us, breathe

and thirst for our blood, and whether we, by God's help, overcome after the word of God, or by force and subtilty of our adversaries be overcome, this will be the conclusion: our adversaries will say, they overcome, and ye perceive how they report of those great, learned men and godly personages at Oxford.

Wherefore I mind never to answer them, except I have books present, because they use not only false allegations of the doctors, but also a piece of the doctors' mind. The next, that we may have sworn notaries, to take things spoken indifferently: which will be very hard to have, for the adversaries will have the oversight of all things, and then make theirs better than it was, and ours worse than it was. Then if we see that two or three, or more, will speak together, or with scoffs and taunts illude and mock us: I suppose it were best to appeal, to be heard before the Queen and the whole Council, and that would much set forth the glory of God. For many of them already know the truth, many of them err rather of zeal than malice, and the others that be indurate should be answered fully to their shame (I doubt not), although to our smart and blood-shedding. For of this I am assured, that the commissioners appointed to hear us and judge us, mean nothing less than to hear the cause indifferently; for they be enemies unto us and our cause, and be at a point already to give sentence against us: so that if it were possible with St. Stephen to speak so that they could not resist us, or to use such silence and patience as Christ did, they will proceed to revenging.

Wherefore, my dear brethren, in the mercy of Jesus Christ, I would be glad to know your advice this day or to-morrow; for shortly we shall be gone, and I verily suppose that we shall not company together, but be kept one abroad from another. They

will deny our appeal, yet let us challenge the appeal, and take witness thereof of such as be present, and require for indifferency of hearing and judgment, to be heard either before the Queen and the Council, or else before all the Parliament, as they were used in King Edward's days.

Further, for my part I will require both books and time to answer. We have been prisoners three quarters of a year, and have lacked our books: and our memories by close keeping, and ingratitude of their parts, be not so present and quick as theirs be. I trust God will be with us, yea, I doubt not but he will, and teach us to do all things in his cause godly and constantly. If our adversaries, that shall be our judges, may have their purpose, we shall dispute one day, be condemned the next day, and suffer the third day. And yet there is no law to condemn us (as far as I know), and so one of the convocation-house said this week to Doctor Weston. To whom Weston made this answer; "It forceth not (quoth he) for a law: we have commission to proceed with them; when they be dispatched, let their friends sue the law."

Now how soon a man may have such a commission at my Lord Chancellor's hand, you know. It is as hard to be obtained as an indictment for Christ at Caiaphas' hand. Besides that, the Bishops having the Queen so upon their side, may do all things both without the advice, and also the knowledge of the rest of the Lords of the temporality: who at this present have found out the mark that the Bishops shot at, and doubtless be not pleased with their doings. I pray you help, that our brother Sanders and the rest in the Marshalsea may understand these things, and send me your answer betime. Judas sleepeth not; neither know we the day nor the hour.

Amen. The Lord Jesus Christ with his holy Spirit comfort and strengthen us all. **Amen.** May 6, Anno 1554.

Yours, and with you unto death in Christ,
JOHN HOOPER.

An Exhortation to Patience, sent to his godly Wife ANN HOOPER: whereby all the true Members of Christ may take comfort and courage, to suffer trouble and affliction for the profession of his holy Gospel.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ (dearly beloved, and my godly wife) in St. Matthew's Gospel said to his disciples, that it was necessary scandals should come: and that they could not be avoided, he perceived as well by the condition of those that should perish and be lost for ever in the world to come, as also by their afflictions that should be saved. For he saw the great part of the people would contemn and neglect whatsoever true doctrine or godly ways should be shewed unto them, or else receive and use it as they thought good to serve their pleasures, without any profits to their souls at all, not caring whether they lived as they were commanded by God's word or not; but would think it sufficient to be counted to have the name of a Christian man, with such works and fruits of his profession and Christianity, as his fathers and elders, after their custom and manner, esteem and take to be good fruits and faithful works, and will not try them by the word of God at all.

These men, by the just judgment of God, be delivered unto the craft and subtilty of the devil, that they might be kept by one scandalous stumbling-block or other, that they never come unto Christ, who came to save those that were lost: as ye may see how God delivereth wicked men up unto their own lusts, to do

one mischief after another, careless until they come into a reprobate mind, that forgetteth itself, and cannot know, what is expedient to be done, or to be left undone, because they close their eyes, and will not see the light of God's word offered unto them: and being thus blinded, they prefer their own vanities before the truth of God's word. Where such corrupt minds be, there is also corrupt election and choice of God's honour: so that the mind of man taketh falsehood for truth, superstition for true religion, death for life, damnation for salvation, hell for heaven, and persecution of Christ's members for God's service and honour.

And as these men wilfully and voluntarily reject the word of God, even so God most justly delivereth them into the blindness of mind and hardness of heart, that they cannot understand, nor yet consent to any thing that God would have preached, and set forth to his glory, after his own will and word: wherefore they hate it mortally, and of all things most detest God's holy word. And as the devil hath entered into their hearts, that they themselves cannot nor will not come to Christ to be instructed by his holy word: even so they cannot abide any other man to be a Christian man, and to lead his life after the word of God, but hate him, persecute him, rob him, imprison him, yea, and kill him, whether he be man or woman, if God suffer it. And so much are these wicked men blinded, that they pass of no law, whether it be God's or man's, but persecute such as never offended, yea, do evil to those that daily have prayed for them, and wish them God's grace.

In their pharisaical and blind fury they have no respect to nature. For the brother persecuteth the brother, the father the son; and most dear friends, in devilish slander and offence, are become most mortal enemies. And no marvel; for when they had

chosen sundry masters, the one the devil, the other God, the one shall agree with the other, as God and the devil agree between themselves. For this cause (that the more part of the world doth choose to serve the devil under cloaked hypocrisy of God's title) Christ said, "It is expedient and necessary that scandals should come," and many means be devised to keep the little babes of Christ from the heavenly Father. But Christ saith, "Woe be unto him by whom the offence cometh:" yet there is no remedy, man being of such corruption and hatred towards God, but that the evil shall be deceived, and persecute the good, and the good shall understand the truth, and suffer persecution for it until the world's end. For as he that was born after the flesh, persecuted in times past him that was born after the spirit; even so it is now.

Therefore forasmuch as we live in this life amongst so many great perils and dangers, we must be well assured by God's word how to bear them, and how patiently to take them, as they be sent to us from God. We must also assure ourselves, that there is no other remedy for Christians in the time of trouble, than Christ himself hath appointed us. In St. Luke he giveth us this commandment, "Ye shall possess your lives in patience," saith he. In the which words he giveth us both commandment what to do, and also great comfort and consolation in all troubles. He sheweth also what is to be done, and what is to be hoped for in troubles: and when troubles happen, he biddeth us be patient, and in no case violently nor seditiously to resist our persecutors, because God hath such care and charge of us, that he will keep us in the midst of all troubles, the very hairs of our head, so that one of them shall not fall away without the will and pleasure of our heavenly Father. Whether the hair therefore tarry on the head, or fall from the

head, it is the will of the Father. And seeing he hath such care for the hairs of our head, how much more doth he care for our life itself?

Wherefore let God's adversaries do what they list, whether they take life, or take it not, they can do us no hurt: for their cruelty hath no further power than God permitteth them, and that which cometh unto us by the will of our heavenly Father can do no harm, no loss, neither destruction unto us, but rather gain, wealth, and felicity. For all troubles and adversities, that chance to such as be of God, by the will of the heavenly Father, can be none other but gain and advantage.

That the spirit of man may feel these consolations, the Giver of them, the heavenly Father, must be prayed unto for the merits of Christ's passion; for it is not the nature of man that can be contented, until it be regenerated and possessed with God's spirit, to bear patiently the troubles of the mind or the body. When the mind and heart of a man seeth on every side sorrow and heaviness, and the worldly eye beholdeth nothing but such things, as be troublous and wholly bent to rob the poor of that he hath, and also to take from him his life: except the man weigh these brittle and uncertain treasures that be taken from him, with the riches of the life to come, and this life of the body with the life in Christ's blood, and so for the love and certainty of the heavenly joys contemn all things present, doubtless he shall never be able to bear the loss of goods, life, or any other thing of this world.

Therefore St. Paul giveth a godly and necessary lesson to all men in this short and transitory life, and therein sheweth how a man may best bear the iniquity and troubles of this world: "If ye be risen again with Christ (saith he) seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of

God the Father." Wherefore the Christian man's heart must be always upon the resurrection of Christ when he is in trouble; and in that glorious resurrection he shall not only see continual and perpetual joy and consolation, but also the victory and triumph over all persecution, trouble, sin, death, hell, the devil, and all other tyrants and persecutors of Christ and of Christ's people, the tears and weepings of the faithful dried up, their wounds healed, their bodies made immortal in joy, their souls for ever praising the Lord, and conjunction and society everlasting with the blessed company of God's elect in perpetual joy. But the words of St. Paul in that place, if they be not marked, shall do little profit to the reader or hearer, and give him no patience at all in this impatient and cruel world.

In the first part St. Paul commandeth us, to think or set our affections on things that are above. When he biddeth us seek the things that are above, he requireth that our minds never cease from prayer and study in God's word, until we see, know, and understand the vanities of this world, the shortness and misery of this life, and the treasures of the world to come, the immortality thereof, the joys of that life; and so never cease seeking, until such time as we know certainly and be persuaded what a blessed man he is that seeketh the one and findeth it, and careth not for the other though he lose it: and in seeking, to have right judgment between the life present and the life to come, we shall find how little the pains, imprisonments, slanders, lies, and death itself is in this world, in respect of pains everlasting, the prison infernal, and dungeon of hell, the sentence of God's just judgment, and everlasting death.

When a man hath, by seeking the word of God, found out what the things above be; then must he (as St. Paul saith) set his affections upon them. And

this commandment is more hard than the other. For man's knowledge many times seeth the best, and knoweth that there is a life to come, better than this life present, as you may see daily how men and women can praise and commend, yea, and wish for heaven, and to be at rest there; yet they set not their affections upon it: they do more affect and love indeed a trifle of nothing in this world that pleaseth their affections, than the treasures of all treasures in heaven, which their own judgment saith is better than all worldly things. Wherefore we must set our affections upon the things that be above; that is to say, when any thing worse than heaven upon the earth, offereth itself to be ours, if we will give our good wills to it, and love it in our hearts, then ought we to see by the judgment of God's word, whether we may have the world without offence of God, and such things as be for this worldly life without his displeasure. If we cannot, St. Paul's commandment must take place, "Set your affection on things that are above."

If the riches of this world may not be gotten nor kept by God's law, neither our lives be continued without the denial of his honour, we must set our affections upon the riches and life that is above, and not upon things that be on the earth. Therefore this second commandment of St. Paul requireth, that as our minds judge heavenly things to be better than things upon the earth, and the life to come better than the life present; so we should choose them before others, and prefer them, and have such affection to the best, that in no case we may set the worst before it, as the most part of the world doth and hath done, for they choose the best and approve it, and yet follow the worst.

But these things (my godly wife) require rather cogitation, meditation, and prayer, than words or

talk. They be easy to be spoken of, but not so easy to be used and practised. Wherefore, seeing they be God's gifts, and none of ours, to have as our own when we would, we must seek them at our heavenly Father's hand, who seeth and is privy how poor and wretched we be, and how naked, how spoiled, and destitute of all his blessed gifts we be by reason of sin. He did command therefore his disciples, when he shewed them that they should take patiently the state of this present life full of troubles and persecution, to pray that they might well escape those troubles that were to come, and to be able to stand before the Son of Man. When you find yourself too much oppressed (as every man shall be sometimes with the fear of God's judgment) use the 77th Psalm that be-
 ginneth, "I will cry unto God with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me." In which Psalm is both godly doctrine and great consolation unto the man or woman that is in anguish of mind.

Use also in such trouble the 88th Psalm, wherein is contained the prayer of a man, that was brought into extreme anguish and misery, and being vexed with adversaries and persecutions, saw nothing but death and hell. And although he felt in himself, that he had not only man, but also God angry towards him: yet he by prayer humbly resorted unto God, as the only port of consolation, and in the midst of his desperate state of trouble put the hope of his salvation in him, whom he felt his enemy. Howbeit, no man of himself can do this, but the Spirit of God, that striketh the man's heart with fear, prayeth for the man stricken and feared with unspeakable groanings. And when you feel yourself or know any other oppressed after such sort, be glad: for after that God hath made you to know what you be of yourself, he will doubtless shew you comfort, and declare unto you what you be in Christ his only Son;

and use prayer often, for that is the means whereby God will be sought unto for his gifts.

These Psalms be for the purpose, when the mind can take no understanding, nor the heart any joy of God's promises: and therefore were these Psalms also made, 6, 22, 30, 31, 38, and 69; from the which you shall learn both patience and consolation.

Remember, that although your life (as all Christian men's be) be hid, and appeareth not, what it is, yet "it is safe," as St. Paul saith, "with God in Christ; and when Christ shall appear, then shall our lives be made open with him in glory." But in the mean time with seeking and setting our affections upon the things that be above, we must patiently suffer whatsoever God shall send unto us in this mortal life. Notwithstanding, it might fortune some would say, who is so perfect, that can let all things pass as they come, and have no care of them; suffer all things and feel nothing; be tempted of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and be not troubled? Verily no man living.

But this I say, that in the strength of Jesus Christ things that come may pass with care; for we be worldly, and yet are we not carried with them from Christ, for we be in him godly. We may suffer things, and feel them as mortal men, yet bear them and overcome them as Christian men. We may be tempted of the devil, the flesh, and the world; but yet although those things pinch, they do not pierce, and although they work sin in us, yet in Christ no damnation to those that be grafted in him.

Hereof may the Christian man learn both consolation and patience: consolation, in that he is compelled both in his body and goods to feel pain and loss, and in the soul heaviness and anguish of mind: howbeit none of them both shall separate him from the love that God beareth him in Christ. He may

learn patience, forasmuch as his enemies both of the body and soul, and the pains also they vex us withal for the time, if they tarry with us as long as we live, yet when death cometh, they shall avoid, and give place to such joys as be prepared for us in Christ. For no pains of the world be perpetual, and whether they shall afflict us for all the time of our mortal life, we know not; for they be servants of God to go and come, as he commandeth them. But we must take heed we meddle not forcibly nor seditiously to put away the persecution appointed unto us by God, but remember Christ's saying, "Possess you your lives by your patience."

And in this commandment God requireth in every man and woman this patient obedience. He saith not, it is sufficient that other holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, and martyrs continued their lives in patience, and patient suffering the troubles of this world: but Christ saith to every one of his people, "By your own patience ye shall continue your life:" not that man hath patience in himself, but that he must have it for himself of God, the only giver of it, if he purpose to be a godly man. Now, therefore, as our profession and religion requireth patience outwardly, without resistance and force; so requireth it patience of the mind, and not to be angry with God, although he use us, that be his own creatures, as him listeth.

: We may not also murmur against God, but say always his judgments be right and just, and rejoice that it pleaseth him by troubles to use us, as he used heretofore such as he most loved in this world, and have a singular care to this commandment, "Be glad and rejoice:" for he sheweth great cause why—"your reward (saith he) is great in heaven."

These promises of Him, that is the truth itself, shall (by God's grace) work both consolation and

patience in the afflicted Christian person. And when our Saviour Christ hath willed men in trouble to be content and patient, because God in the end of trouble in Christ hath ordained eternal consolation, he useth also to take from us all shame and rebuke, as though it were not an honour to suffer for Christ, because the wicked world doth abhor and curse such poor troubled Christians. Wherefore Christ placeth all his honourably, and saith, "Even so persecuted they the Prophets that were before you."

We may also see with whom the afflicted for Christ's sake be esteemed by St. Paul to the Hebrews: whereas the number of the blessed and glorious company of saints appear now to our faith in heaven in joy; yet in the letter, for the time of this life, in such pains and contempt as were never more. Let us therefore consider both them and all other things of the world, since the fall of man, and we shall perceive nothing to come to perfection, but with such confusion and disorder to the eye of the world, as though things were rather lost for ever, than like to come to any perfection at all. For of godly men, who came to heaven (no not Christ himself) until such time as the world had thought verily that both he and all his had been clean destroyed and cast away? as the wise men say of the wicked people, "We thought them to be fools, but they be in peace."

We may learn by things that nourish and maintain us, both meat and drink, what loathsomeness and (in manner) abhorring they come unto, before they work their perfection in us. From life they be brought to the fire, and clean altered from that they were, when they were alive; from the fire to the trencher and knife, there to be hacked; from the trencher to the mouth, and as small ground, as the teeth can grind them; and from the mouth into the stomach, and there so boiled and digested before

they nourish, that whosoever saw the same, would loath and abhor his own nourishment, before it come to its perfection.

Is it then any marvel, if such Christians as God delighteth in, be so mangled and defaced in this world, which is the kitchen and mill to boil and grind the flesh of God's people in, till they achieve their perfection in the world to come? And as a man looketh for the nutriment of his meat, when it is full digested, and not before: so must he look for his salvation, when he hath passed this troublesome world, and not before. Raw flesh is not meat wholesome for man: and unmortified men and women be not creatures meet for God. Therefore Christ saith, that his people must be broken, and thoroughly torn in the mill of this world, and so shall they be fine meal unto the heavenly Father. And it shall be a Christian man's part, and the duty of a mind replenished with the Spirit of God, to mark the order of God in all his things, how he dealeth with them, and how they suffer, and be content to let God do his will upon them; as St. Paul saith: "They wait until the number of the elect be fulfilled, and never be at rest, but look for the time when God's people shall appear in glory."

We must therefore patiently suffer, and willingly attend upon God's doings, although they seem clean contrary, after our judgment, to our wealth and salvation: as Abraham did when he was bid to offer his son Isaac, in whom God promised the blessing, and multiplying of his seed: Joseph at the last came to that, which God promised him, although in the mean time, after the judgment of the world, he was never like to be (as God said he should be) lord over his brethren.

When Christ would make the blind man to see, he put clay upon his eyes, which, after the judgment of

man, was a means rather to make him double blind, than to give him his sight: but he obeyed, and knew that God could work his desire, what means soever he used contrary to man's reason; and as touching this world, he useth all his after the same sort. If any smart, his people be the first; if any suffer shame, they begin; if any be subject to slander, it is those that he loveth; so that he sheweth no face nor favour, nor love almost in this world outwardly to them, but layeth clay upon their sore eyes that be sorrowful: yet the patient man seeth (as St. Paul saith) life hid under these miseries and adversities, and sight under foul clay, and in the mean time he hath the testimony of a good conscience, and believeth God's promises to be his consolation in the world to come, which is more worthy unto him, than all the world is worth besides: and blessed is that man in whom God's Spirit beareth record, that he is the son of God, whatsoever troubles he suffer in this troublesome world.

And to judge things indifferently (my good wife), the troubles be not yet generally, as they were in our good fathers' time, soon after the death and resurrection of our Saviour Christ Jesus, whereof he spake in St. Matthew. Of the which place you and I have taken many times great consolation, and especially of the latter part of the chapter, wherein is contained the last day and end of all our troubles (I doubt not), both for you and me, and for such as love the coming of our Saviour Christ in judgment. Remember, therefore, that place, and mark it again, and ye shall in this time see this great consolation, and also learn much patience.

Were there ever such troubles, as Christ threatened upon Jerusalem? Was there since the beginning of the world such affliction? Who were then best at ease? The Apostles, that suffered in body persecu-

tion, and gathered of it ease and quietness in the promises of God. And no marvel; for Christ saith, "Lift up your heads; for your redemption is at hand;" that is to say, your eternal rest approacheth and draweth near. The world is stark blind, and more foolish than foolishness itself, and so be the people of the world. For when God saith, "Trouble shall come," they will have ease. And when God saith, "Be merry, and rejoice in trouble," we lament and mourn, as though we were cast away. But this our flesh (which is never merry with virtue, nor sorry with vice, never laugheth with grace, nor ever weepeth with sin) holdeth fast with the world, and letteth God slip.

But (my dearly beloved wife) you know to perceive and to beware of the vanity and crafts of the devil well enough in Christ. And that ye may the better have patience in the Spirit of God, read again the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, and mark what difference is between the destruction of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the whole world, and you shall see, that then here were left alive many offenders to repent: but at the latter day there shall be absolute judgment and sentence (never to be revoked) of eternal life and eternal death upon all men; and yet towards the end of the world we have nothing so much extremity as they had then, but even as we be able to bear. So doth the merciful Father lay upon us now imprisonment (and I suppose for my part shortly death), now spoil of goods, loss of friends, and the greatest loss of all, the knowledge of God's word. God's will be done. I wish in Christ Jesus, our only Mediator and Saviour, your constancy and consolation, that you may live for ever and ever, whereof in Christ I doubt not; to whom for his blessed and most painful passion I commit you. Amen.

JOHN HOOVER.

October 13, Anno 1553.

To a certain godly Woman, instructing her how she should behave herself in the Time of her Widowhood.

The grace of God, and the comfort of his holy Spirit, be with you, and all them that unfeignedly love his holy Gospel. Amen.

I thank you, dear sister, for your most loving remembrance: and although I cannot recompense the same, yet do I wish with all my heart, that God would do it, requiring you not to forget your duty towards God in those perilous days, in the which the Lord will try us. I trust you do increase by reading of the Scriptures, the knowledge you have of God, and that you diligently apply yourself to follow the same: for the knowledge helpeth not, except the life be according thereto. Further, I do heartily pray you, to consider the state of your widowhood; and if God shall put in your mind to change it, remember the saying of St. Paul, 1 Cor. vii. "It is lawful for the widow or maiden to marry to whom they list, so it be in the Lord," that is to say, to such a one as is of Christ's religion.

Dearly beloved in Christ, remember these words, for you shall find thereby great joy and comfort, if you change your state. Whereof I will, when I have better leisure (as now I have none at all), further advertise you. In the mean time I commend you to God, and the guiding of his good Spirit, who stablish and confirm you in all well doing, and keep you blameless to the day of the Lord. Watch and pray, for his day is at hand.

Yours assured in Christ,
JOHN HOOVER.

*To all my dear Brethren, my Relievers and Helpers
in the City of London.*

The grace of God be with you, Amen. I have received from you (dearly beloved in our Saviour Jesus Christ), by the hands of my servant, William Downton, your liberality, for the which I most heartily thank you, and I praise God highly in you for you, who hath moved your hearts to shew this kindness towards me, praying him, to preserve you from all famine, scarcity, and lack of the truth of his word, which is the lively food of your souls, as you preserve my body from hunger, and other necessities, which should have happened unto me, were it not cared for by the benevolence and charity of godly people. Such as have taken all worldly goods and lands from me, and spoiled me of all that I had, have imprisoned my body, and appointed not one halipenny to feed or relieve me withal: but I do forgive them, and pray for them daily in my poor prayer unto God, and from my heart I wish their salvation, and quietly and patiently bear their injuries, wishing no farther extremity to be used towards us.

Yet, if the contrary seem best unto our heavenly Father, I have made my reckoning, and fully resolve myself to suffer the uttermost what they are able to do against me, yea, death itself by the aid of Christ Jesus, who died the most vile death of the cross for us wretches and miserable sinners. But of this I am assured, that the wicked world, with all its force and power, shall not touch one of the hairs of our heads without leave and license of our heavenly Father, whose will be done in all things. If he will life, life be; if he will death, death be it. Only we pray, that our wills may be subject unto his will;

and then, although both we and all the world see none other thing but death, yet if he think life best, we shall not die, no, although the sword be drawn out over our heads: as Abraham thought to kill his son Isaac, yet when God perceived that Abraham had surrendered his will to God's will, and was content to kill his son, God then saved his son.

Dearly beloved, if we be contented to obey God's will, and for his commandment's sake to surrender our goods and our lives to be at his pleasure, it maketh no matter whether we keep goods and life, or lose them. Nothing can hurt us that is taken from us for God's cause, nor can any thing at length do us good, that is preferred contrary to God's commandments. Let us wholly suffer God to use us and ours after his holy wisdom, and beware we neither use nor govern ourselves contrary to his will by our own wisdom: for if we do, our wisdom will at length prove foolishness. It is kept to no good purpose, that we keep contrary unto his commandments. It can by no means be taken from us, which he would should tarry with us. He is no good Christian that ruleth himself and his, as worldly means serve: for he that so doth shall have many changes as chance in the world. To-day with the world he shall like and praise the truth of God, to-morrow as the world will, so will he like and praise the falsehood of man; to-day with Christ, and to-morrow with antichrist. Wherefore, dear brethren, as touching your behaviour towards God, use both your inward spirits, and your outward bodies; your inward and your outward man (I say) not after the manner of men, but after the infallible word of God.

Restrain from evil in both; and glorify your heavenly Father in both. For if ye think ye can inwardly in the heart serve him, and yet outwardly serve with the world in external service the thing that

is not God, ye deceive yourselves ; for both the body and the soul must together concur in the honour of God, as St. Paul plainly teacheth. (1 Cor. vi.) For if an honest wife be bound to give both heart and body to faith and service in marriage ; and if an honest wife's faith in the heart cannot stand with an whorish or defiled body outwardly ; much less can the true faith of a Christian in the service of Christianity, stand with the bodily service of eternal idolatry : for the mystery of marriage is not so honourable between man and wife, as it is between Christ and every Christian man, as St. Paul saith.

Therefore (dear brethren) pray to the heavenly Father, that as he spared not the soul nor the body of his dearly beloved Son, but applied both of them with extreme pain, to work our salvation both of body and soul ; so he will give us all grace to apply our bodies and souls to be servants unto him : for doubtless he requireth as well the one as the other, and cannot be discontented with the one, and well pleased with the other. Either he hateth both, or loveth both ; he divideth not his love to one, and his hatred to the other. Let not us therefore, good brethren, divide ourselves, and say our souls serve him, whatsoever our bodies do to the contrary for civil order and policy.

But, alas ! I know by myself, what troubles you, that is, the great danger of the world, that will revenge (ye think) your service to God with sword and fire, with loss of goods and lands. But (dear brethren) weigh of the other side, that your enemies and God's enemies shall not do so much as they would, but as much as God shall suffer them, who can trap them in their own counsels, and destroy them in the midst of their fury. Remember, ye be the workmen of the Lord, and called into his vineyard, there to labour till evening tide, that you may

receive your penny, which is more worth than all the kingdoms of the earth. But He that calleth us into his vineyard, hath not told us how sore and how fervently the sun shall trouble us in our labour: but hath bid us labour, and commit the bitterness thereof unto Him, who can and will so moderate all afflictions, that no man shall have more laid upon him, than in Christ he shall be able to bear. Unto whose merciful tuition and defence I commend both your souls and bodies. September 2, Anno 1554.

Your with my poor prayer,
JOHN HOOVER

To a Merchant of London, by whose Means he had received much Comfort in his great Necessities in the Fleet.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God and you for the great help and consolation I have received in the time of adversity by your charitable means, but most rejoice, that you be not altered from truth, although falsehood cruelly seeketh to distain her. Judge not, my brother, truth by outward appearance, for truth now worse appeareth and more vilely is rejected than falsehood. Leave the outward show, and see by the word of God what truth is, and accept truth, and dislike her not though man call her falsehood. As it is now, so hath it been heretofore, the truth rejected, and falsehood received. Such as have professed truth, for truth have smarted, and the friends of falsehood laughed them to scorn. The trial of both hath been by contrary success: the one having the commendation of truth by man, but the condemnation of falsehood by God, flourishing for a time with endless destruction; the

other afflicted a little season, but ending with immortal joys.

Wherefore, dear brother, ask and demand of your book, the Testament of Jesus Christ, in these woful and wretched days, what you should think, and what you should stay upon for a certain truth; and whatsoever you hear taught, try it by your book, whether it be true or false. The days be dangerous, and full of peril, not only for the world and worldly things, but for heaven and heavenly things. It is a trouble to lose the treasure of this life, but yet a very pain, if it be kept with the offence of God.

Cry, call, pray, and in Christ daily require help, succour, mercy, wisdom, grace, and defence, that the wickedness of this world prevail not against us. We began well, God preserve us until the end. I would write more often unto you, but I do perceive you to be at so much charges with me, that I fear you would think when I write, I crave. Send me nothing till I send to you for it; and so tell the good men your partners: and when I need, I will be bold with you. December 3, 1554.

Yours with my prayer,
JOHN HOOPER.

To Mrs. WILKINSON, a Woman hearty in God's Cause, and comfortable to his afflicted Members.

The grace of God, and the comfort of his holy Spirit, be with you. Amen.

I am very glad to hear of your health, and do thank you for your loving tokens. But I am a great deal more glad to hear how christianly you avoid idolatry, and prepare yourself to suffer the extremity of the world, rather than to endanger yourself to God. You do as you ought to do in this behalf; and in suffering of transitory pains, you shall avoid permanent

torments in the world to come. Use your life, and keep it with as much quietness as you can, so that you offend not God. The ease that cometh with his displeasure, turneth at length to unspeakable pains; and the gains of the world, with the loss of his favour, is beggary and wretchedness.

Reason is to be amended in this cause of religion: for it will choose and follow an error with the multitude, if it may be allowed, rather than turn to faith, and follow the truth with the people of God. Moses found the same fault in himself, and did amend it, choosing rather to be afflicted with the people of God, than to use the liberty of the king's daughter, that accounted him as her son.

Pray for contentation and peace of the Spirit, and rejoice in such troubles as shall happen unto you for the truth's sake: for in that part Christ saith, "You be happy." Pray also for me, I pray you, that I may do in all things the will of our heavenly Father: to whose tuition and defence I commend you.

JOHN HOOPER.

*To my dear Friends in God, Master JOHN HALL
and his Wife.*

The grace of God be with you. Amen. I thank you for your loving and gentle friendship at all times, praying to God to shew unto you such favour, that whatsoever trouble and adversity happen, ye go not back from him. These days be dangerous and full of peril, but yet let us comfort ourselves in calling to remembrance the days of our forefathers, upon whom the Lord sent such troubles, that many hundreds, yea, many thousands died for the testimony of Jesus Christ, both men and women, suffering with patience and constancy as much cruelty as tyrants could devise, and so departed out of this mi-

serable world to the bliss everlasting; where now they remain for ever, looking always for the end of this sinful world, when they shall receive their bodies again in immortality, and see the number of the elect associated with them in full and consummate joys: and as virtuous men suffering martyrdom, and tarrying a little while in this world with pains, by and by rested in joys everlasting; and as their pains ended their sorrows, and began ease, so did their constancy and stedfastness animate and confirm all good people in the truth, and gave them encouragement and lust to suffer the like, rather than to fall with the world to consent unto wickedness and idolatry.

Wherefore, my dear friends, seeing God of his part hath illuminated you with the same gift and knowledge of true faith, wherein the apostles, the evangelists, and all martyrs suffered most cruel death, thank him for his grace in knowledge, and pray unto him for strength and perseverance, that through your own fault ye be not ashamed nor afraid to confess it. Ye be in the truth, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, nor antichrist with all his imps prove it to be false. They may kill and prosecute, but never overcome. Be of good comfort, and fear God more than man. This life is short and miserable; happy be they that can spend it to the glory of God. Pray for me as I do for you, and commend me to all good men and women. December 22, Anno 1554,

Your brother in Christ,

JOHN HOOPER.

*To my dearly beloved Sister in the Lord, Mistress
ANN WARCOP.*

The grace of God be with you, Amen. I thank you for your loving token. I pray you, burden not yourself too much. It were meet for me rather to bear

again, than to be a hindrance to many. I did rejoice at the coming of this bearer, to understand of your constancy, and how that you be fully resolved, by God's grace, rather to suffer extremity, than to go from the truth in God which you have professed.

He that gave you grace to begin in so infallible a truth, will follow you in the same unto the end. But, my loving sister, as you be travailing this perilous journey, take this lesson with you, practised by wise men: whereof you may read in the second of St. Matthew's gospel. Such as travelled to find Christ, followed only the star, and as long as they saw it, they were assured they were in the right way, and had great mirth in their journey. But when they entered into Jerusalem, whereas the star led them not thither, but unto Bethlehem, and there asked the citizens the thing that the star shewed before: as long as they tarried in Jerusalem, and would be instructed where Christ was born, they were not only ignorant of Bethlehem, but also lost the sight of the star that led them before.

Whereof we learn, in any case while we be going in this life to seek Christ that is above, to beware we lose not the star of God's word, that only is the mark that sheweth us where Christ is, and which way we may come unto him. But as Jerusalem stood in the way, and was an impediment to these wise men; so doth the synagogue of antichrist, that beareth the name of Jerusalem, which by interpretation is called the vision of peace, and amongst the people now, is called the catholic church, stand in the way that pilgrims must go by through this world to Bethlehem, the house of saturity and plentifulness, and is an impediment to all Christian travellers; yea, and except the mere grace of God be, will keep the pilgrims still in her, that they shall not come where Christ is at all. And to stay them indeed, they take

away the star of light, which is God's word, that it cannot be seen: as ye may see how the celestial star was hid from the wise men, when they asked of the Pharisees at Jerusalem, where Christ was born. Ye may see what great dangers happened unto these wise men, while they were learning of liars where Christ was. First, they were out of their way, and next they lost their guide and conductor, the heavenly star. Christ is mounted from us into heaven, and there we seek him (as we say); and let us go thitherward by the star of his word. Beware we happen not to come into Jerusalem, the church of men, and ask for him. If we do, we go out of the way, and lose also our conductor and guide that only leadeth us straight thither.

The poets write in fables, that Jason, when he fought with the dragon in the isle of Colchis, was preserved by the medicines of Medea, and so won the golden fleece. And they write also that Phaeton, whom they feign the son and heir of the high god Apollo, would needs upon a day have the conduction of the sun round about the world; but as they feign, he missed of the accustomed course: whereupon when he went too high, he burnt heaven, and when he went too low, he burnt the earth and the waters.

These profane histories do shame us that be Christian men. Jason against the poison of the dragon used only the medicine of Medea. What a shame is it for a Christian man against the poison of the devil, heresy, and sin, to use any other remedy, than Christ and his word? Phaeton for lack of knowledge was afraid of every sign of the zodiac, that the sun passed by: wherefore he went now too low, and now too high, and at length fell down and drowned himself in the sea. Christian men for lack of knowledge, and for fear of such dangers as Christian men must needs pass by, go clean out of order, and at length fall into the pit of hell.

Sister, take heed: you shall in your journey towards heaven meet with many a monstrous beast: have the salve of God's word therefore ready. You shall meet with husband, children, lovers, and friends, that shall, if God be with them (as God be praised he is, I would it were with all o' her alike), be very lets and impediments to your purpose. You shall meet with slander and contempt of the world, and be accounted ungracious and ungodly; ye shall hear and meet with cruel tyranny to do you all extremities; you shall now and then see the troubles of your own conscience, and feel your own weakness; you shall hear that you be cursed by the sentence of the catholic church, with such like terrors: but pray to God, and follow the star of his word, and you shall arrive at the port of eternal salvation, by the merits only of Jesus Christ; to whom I commend you and all yours most heartily.

Yours in Christ,

JOHN HOOPER.

To the godly and faithful Company of Prisoners in both the Counters, which were taken together at Prayer in a House in Bow Churchyard.

The grace, favour, consolation, and aid of the Holy Ghost be with you now and ever: so be it.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, ever since your imprisonment, I have been marvellously moved with great affections and passions, as well of mirth and gladness, as of heaviness and sorrow. Of gladness in this, that I perceive how ye be bent and given to prayer and invocation of God's help, in these dark and wicked proceedings of men against God's glory. I have been sorry, to perceive the malice and wickedness of men to be so cruel, devilish, and tyrannical, to persecute the people of God, for serving of God;

for saying and hearing of the holy Psalms and the word of eternal life. These cruel doings do declare, that the Papists' church is more bloody and tyrannical, than ever was the sword of the heathens and gentiles.

When I heard of your taking, and what ye were doing, wherefore, and by whom ye were taken; I remembered how the Christians in the primitive church were used by the cruelty of unchristianed heathens in the time of Trajan the emperor, about 77 years after Christ's ascension into heaven. The Christians were persecuted very sore, as though they had been traitors and movers of sedition. Whereupon the gentile emperor Trajan required to know the true cause of Christian men's troubles. A great learned man called Plinius Secundus wrote unto him and said, it was because the Christians said certain Psalms before day unto one called Christ, whom they worshipped for God. When Trajan the emperor understood it was for nothing but for conscience and religion, he caused by his commandments every where, that no man should be persecuted for serving of God. Lo! a gentile and heathen man would not have such, as were of a contrary religion, punished for serving of God.

But the Pope and his church have cast you into prison, being taken even in doing the work of God, and one of the most excellent works that is required of Christian men, that is to wit, whiles ye were in prayer, and not in such wicked and superstitious prayer, as the Papists use, but in the same prayer that Christ hath taught you to pray; and in his name only ye gave God thanks for that ye have received, and for his sake ye ask for such things, as ye want. O glad may ye be that ever ye were born, to be apprehended whilst ye were so virtuously occupied. Blessed be they that suffer for righteousness sake. For a

God had suffered them that took your bodies, then to have taken your life also: now had ye been following the Lamb in perpetual joys away from the company and assembly of wicked men. But the Lord would not have you suddenly so to depart, but reserveth you gloriously to speak and maintain his truth to the world.

Be ye not careful what ye shall say, for God will go out and in with you, and will be present in your hearts and in your mouths to speak his wisdom, although it seem foolishness to the world. He that hath begun this good work in you, confirm, strengthen, and continue you in the same unto the end, and pray unto him, that ye may fear Him only, that hath power to kill both body and soul, and to cast them into hell fire. Be of good comfort: all the hairs of your heads be numbered, and there is not one of them can perish, except your heavenly Father suffer it to perish. Now ye be even in the field, and placed in the fore'front of Christ's battle. Doubtless it is a singular favour of God, and a special love of him towards you, to give you this foreward and pre-eminence, and a sign that he trusteth you before others of his people.

Wherefore (dear brethren and sisters) continually fight this fight of the Lord. Your cause is most just and godly; ye stand for the true Christ, who is after the flesh in heaven, and for his true religion and honour, which is amply, fully, sufficiently, and abundantly contained in the holy Testament sealed with Christ's own blood.

How much be ye bound to God, to put you in trust with so holy and just a cause! Remember what lookers upon ye have, to see and behold you in your fight, even God and all his holy angels, who be ready always to take you up into heaven, if ye be slain in this fight. Also you have standing at your backs all

the multitude of the faithful, who shall take courage, strength, and desire, to follow such noble and valiant Christians as ye be. Be not afraid of your adversaries, for He that is in you, is stronger than he that is in them. Shrink not although it be pain to you. Your pains be not so great, as hereafter your joys shall be.

Read the comfortable chapters to the Rom. viii. x. xv. Heb. xi. xii. And upon your knees thank God that ever ye were accounted worthy to suffer any thing for his name sake. Read the second chapter of St. Luke's gospel, and there ye shall see, how the shepherds that watched their sheep all night, as soon as they heard that Christ was born at Bethlehem, by and by they went to see him. They did not reason nor debate with themselves, who should keep the wolf from the sheep in the mean time, but did as they were commanded, and committed their sheep unto Him whose pleasure they obeyed. So let us do now, when we be called, and commit all other things unto Him that calleth us. He will take heed that all things shall be well: he will help the husband, he will comfort the wife, he will guide the servants; he will keep the house, he will preserve the goods; yea, rather than it should be undone, he will wash the dishes, and rock the cradle. Cast, therefore, all your care upon God, for he careth for you.

Besides this ye may perceive by your imprisonment, that your adversaries' weapons against you be nothing but flesh, blood, and tyranny. For, if they were able, they would maintain their wicked religion by God's word: but for lack of that, they would violently compel such as they cannot by the holy Scriptures persuade, because the holy word of God and all Christ's doings be clean contrary unto them. I pray you, pray for me, and I will for you. And although we be asunder after the world, yet we are in Christ (I trust) for ever, joying in the spirit, and

so shall meet in the place of the heavenly joys after this short and transitory life is ended. God's peace be with you, Amen. Fourth of January 1554.

JOHN HOOVER.

Another Letter to certain godly Persons, exhorting them to stick constantly to the professed Truth of the Gospel in these Days of Trial, and not to shrink from any Trouble.

The grace of God be with you, Amen. I do give our heavenly Father thanks, that moveth you to remember your afflicted brethren, and I do (as I am bound) pray for you, that with your remembrance of me, ye provide help, and succour me with such goods, as God doth endue you withal. Doubtless if ever wretch and vile sinner was bound unto God, I am most specially bound for these ten months almost. Ever since my imprisonment, I have had no living nor goods to sustain myself withal, yet such hath been the favour of our heavenly Father, that I have had sufficient to eat and drink, and the same paid for. Seeing he is so merciful and careful for my sinful body, I doubt not, but he hath more care of my wretched soul, so that in both I may serve his majesty, and be a lively and profitable member of his poor afflicted church. I do not care what extremity this world shall work or devise, praying you in the bowels of Him that shed his precious blood for you, to remember and follow the knowledge ye have learned of his truth.

Be not ashamed nor afraid to follow him; beware of this sentence, that it take no place in you: "No man (saith Christ) that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh backward, is meet for the kingdom of God." Remember, that Christ willed him that would build a tower, to sit down first and look

whether he were able to perform it, lest he should begin and leave off in the midst, and so be mocked of his neighbours, and lose therewithal as much, as he bestowed. Christ told such as would build in him eternal life, what the price thereof was, even at the beginning of his doctrine, and said they should be persecuted. Also they should sometimes pay and bestow both goods and lands, before the tower of salvation would be builded.

Seeing the price of truth in religion hath been always the displeasure and persecution of the world, let us bear it, and Christ will recompense the charges abundantly. It is no loss to lack the love of the world, and to find the love of God; nor no harm to suffer the loss of worldly things, and find eternal life. If man hate and God love, man kill the body, and God bring both body and soul to eternal life, the exchange is good and profitable. For the love of God use singleness towards him. Beware of this foolish and deceitful collusion, to think a man may serve God in spirit secretly to his conscience, although outwardly with his body and bodily presence he cleave for civil order to such rites and ceremonies as now be used contrary to God and his word. Be assured that whatsoever he be that giveth this counsel, shall be before God able to do you no more profit than the fig-leaves did unto Adam.

“Glorify God both in your bodies and in your spirits which are God’s.” Take heed of that commandment, no man is able to dispense with it. Such as be yet clear, and have not been present at the wicked mass and idolatrous service, let them pray to God to stand fast: such as for weakness and fear have been at it, repent and desire God’s forgiveness, and doubtless he will have mercy upon you. It is a fearful thing, that many do not only thus dissemble with God, but also excuse and defend the dissimu-

lation: beware of that, dear brethren, for it is a sore matter to delight in evil things. Let us acknowledge and bewail our evil; then God shall send grace to amend us, and strength better to bear his cross.

I doubt not but ye will judge of my writing as I mean towards you in my heart, which is doubtless your eternal salvation in Christ Jesus, to whom I heartily commend you. June 14, 1554.

JOHN HOOPER.

To one that was fallen from the known Truth of the Gospel to Antichrist and his damnable Religion.

Grace, mercy, and peace of conscience, be multiplied in all penitent hearts. Amen.

Dear brother in Christ Jesus, it is not long since I was informed what love and fervent zeal ye have heretofore borne to God's true religion, appearing as well by your life and conversation, as by absenting yourself from the idolaters' temple and congregation of false worshippers. But now, (alas!) through the devilish persuasions and wicked counsel of worldly men, ye have declined from your former profession, building again that which before ye destroyed, and so are become a trespasser, bearing a stranger's yoke with the unbelievers. Of which thing ever since I was informed, I have been marvellously moved with inward affections, much lamenting so great and sudden a change, as to be turned from Him that called you in the grace of Christ, unto the dissimulation of wicked hypocrites, which (as St. Paul saith) is nothing else, but that there be some which trouble you, intending to make you like as they are, even lovers of themselves, whose hearts are wedded to the perishing treasures of this world, wherein is the whole joy and felicity, contrary to St.

John, which saith : " See that ye love not the world, neither those things which are in the world." But they as men without ears, and having hearts without understanding, do neither weigh the terrible threatenings of God against such offenders, and the most awful punishment due for the same ; nor yet consider the loving admonition and calling of God, who both teacheth how to avoid his wrath, and also by what means to attain to salvation.

Wherefore (dear brethren) I humbly beseech you, even by the mercifulness of God, and as you tender your own salvation, to give ear no longer to their pestilent persuasions, but even now forthwith to repent : and have no longer fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, neither fashion you yourself again like unto the world. Delight not in the friendship thereof, for all such be the enemies of God. Grieve not any longer the holy Spirit of God, unto whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Acknowledge your offence, and from whence ye are fallen : prostrate yourself before God, asking mercy for Christ's sake. Mourn with Mary Magdalen, lament with David, cry with Jonas, weep with Peter, and make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, whose pitiful eyes attend always to wipe away the tears from every troubled conscience. Such is his entire love toward all those that turn unto him, making them this sweet promise confirmed by a mighty and vehement kind of speaking : " Tell them as truly as I live (saith he), I will not the death of a sinner, but much rather that he turn from his evil ways and live. Turn you, turn you from your ungodly ways, O ye of the house of Israel ; O wherefore will ye die ? " Behold, ye are here forgiven, your sin is blotted out, and the most joyful countenance of God turned again towards you.

What now remaineth ? Verily this, that you from

henceforth keep circumspect watch, and become followers of Christ, sustaining for his name's sake, all such adversities as shall be measured unto you by the sufferance of God our heavenly Father, who so careth for us, that not one hair of our heads shall perish without his will; who also, considering the tender and weak faith of his children, not able as yet to stand against the force of antichrist's tyranny, giveth them this loving liberty: When ye be persecuted in one city, fly to another. O most tender compassion of Christ! how careful is he over his people! Who would not now, rather than to offend so merciful a God, fly this wicked realm, as your most Christian brother and many others have done, or else with boldness of heart, and patience of spirit, bear manfully the cross even unto the death, as divers of our brethren have done before us, as is declared at large in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, which I pass over, and come to our Saviour Christ, whose example for our singular comfort St. Paul encourageth us to follow, saying: "Let us also, seeing that we are compassed with so great a multitude of witnesses, lay away all that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth on, and let us run with patience unto the battle that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, abode the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, &c."—"From whence he shall come shortly," saith St. John, "and his rewards with him, to give every man according as his deed shall be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that their power may be in the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city, where they (saith Esaias) shall have their pleasure in the Lord, who will carry them on high, above the earth, and will feed them with the heritage of Jacob

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their father, for the Lord's own mouth has so promised."

This I have been bold to write unto you for Christian love's sake that I bear to you, whose salvation I wish as mine own, beseeching God that your whole spirit, soul, and body may be kept faultless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Your brother in Christ,

JOHN HOOPER.

To the faithful and lively Members of our Saviour Jesus Christ, inhabiting the City of London, Grace and Peace from the heavenly Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your faith and firm hope of eternal life (dearly beloved), which of long time ye have learned and thoroughly persuaded yourselves in, by the truth and infallible verity of the heavenly word, sealed with Christ's most precious blood, is very sore and dangerously assaulted, and by all means possible attempted to be taken from you, that ye should have no longer credit to God's truth, but believe man's lies, nor have your salvation by Christ that once died and offered himself for sin once for all; but that ye should believe now your salvation in Christ, to be many times offered by wicked men every day in the abominable mass, to the utter conculcation and defacing of Christ's death, as the wicked Pope and his adherents would persuade you, and not as Christ your Saviour hath taught you. But this sudden and miserable change from the truth unto falsehood, and from God and Christ to the devil and antichrist, doubtless cometh of God for our manifold sins towards the heavenly Father our Shepherd, that taught us a long time with his blessed word, and we were

neither thankful for it, nor yet put our trust in him, as in one that only could save and defend his own word. But we thought in our foolishness, that the world was so much and so many ways with the word of God, that even by man's strength it might have been defended, whereas the truth of God's word is permanent, and never faileth, saying: "Cursed be they that make flesh their defence and shield."

For as King David, when God had brought him to possess his kingdom peaceably, said (like a fool as he was), I shall never be more unquieted, but yet the Lord turned his face from him, and he found straightway such an alteration as he never found before, with increase of new dangers, more troubles than ever he had before; even likewise, when God had given us a blessed and holy king, and such magistrates (although they were sinners) as wished the glory of God only to be preferred by true doctrine; we, like carnal men, thought ourselves so sure and so stablished, that it had not been possible to have seen such a piteous and miserable change, and the truth of God's word so oppressed, as we see at this present day. But we be most worthily punished, and even in the same ways that we have offended. We did put our trust in flesh, and where God's Spirit in flesh dwelled, as in our holy and blessed King Edward the Sixth, he is now dead in the flesh, and his holy soul resteth with the heavenly Father in joys for ever: he is now (I say) taken from us, and cannot help us. And such as in his time seemed much to favour the glory of God, are become God's enemies, and can both hear others to proceed against the glory of God, and also set forth the same themselves as much as they may: so that such spiritual and godly persons as sought in the flesh God's glory, are taken from us, or else in such case, as they can do us no good. And such flesh as followed and

loved God in the sight of the world, and had great advantage by his word, are become his very enemies, and not only his, but also enemies to his members.

But yet as King David knew his foolish folly, and with repentance repented and found grace: so it may please God to give us of his grace and holy Spirit, to amend our faults in the like offences, and help us, as he did him. But doubtless, great is our iniquity. For there was never so great abomination read of and so quickly to prevail, as this abomination of the wicked mass hath prevailed in England. And all Christian men know that the Turks and heathens neither have, nor yet had ever, any so sensibly known, and manifest an idol.

Wherefore, that Almighty God of his mercy may preserve his people in this noble city of London, I have written upon the 23d Psalm of King David, to advertise men how they shall beware of heresies and false doctrine, and so to live to his honour and glory. Albeit, I know (dearly beloved) that all those which seek God's honour, and the furtherance of his Gospel, be accounted the Queen's enemies, although we daily pray for her Grace, and never think her harm: but we must be content to suffer slander, and patiently to bear all such injuries. Nevertheless, this is out of doubt, that the Queen's Highness hath no authority to compel any man to believe any thing, contrary to God's word, neither may the subject give her Grace that obedience: in case he do, his soul is lost for ever. Our bodies, goods, and lives be at her Highness's commandment, and she shall have them as of true subjects: but the soul of man for religion is bound to none but unto God and his holy word.

JOHN HOOPER.

An Answer to a Friend of his for a Woman that was troubled with her Husband in Matters of Religion, how she should behave herself towards him.

The grace and peace of God, our dear Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be with you. Amen.

As concerning the party whom you wrote unto me of, I have here sent you mine advice, and what I think is best in this case to be done. First, she shall remember the counsel of St. Paul, 1 Cor. vii. where he speaketh to such as be compelled in matrimony, and be of two sundry and divers religions: if the unbelieving man will dwell with the faithful woman, the wife cannot forsake him. Or in case the unbelieving woman will dwell with her believing husband, the husband cannot forsake her. But if the unbelieving party (whether it be husband or wife) will depart, the believing party is at liberty. Now in this time, to believe that the priest can make God, or to believe that which was not God yesterday, can be both God and man to-day, and so to honour that which was but very bread* yesterday,

* Among many other memorable acts and notes worthy to be remembered in the history of Master Hooper, this is also not to be forgotten which happened between him, and a bragging friar, a little after the beginning of his imprisonment: the story whereof here followeth.

A friar came from France to England with great vaunt, asking who was the greatest heretic in all England, thinking belike to do some great act upon him. To whom answer was made, that Master Hooper had then the greatest name to be the chiefest ringleader, who was then in the Fleet prison. The friar coming to him, asked why he was committed to prison.

He said, "for debt."

"Nay," said he, "it was for heresy."

Which when the other had denied, "What sayest thou" (quoth he), "This is my body?"

Master Hooper, being partly moved at the sudden question, desired that he might ask of him again another, which was this:

for the true God that made both heaven and earth and all that be in them, and for the body and soul of Christ that suffered for our redemption, and took from us our sins upon the cross ; is very idolatry, and to be committed of no Christian man ; for the pain of it, without repentance, is everlasting damnation.

In matrimony it is meet therefore, that which party soever be persuaded and knoweth the truth, be it the husband or the wife, the truth be spoken, taught, and opened unto the party that is not persuaded. For as St. Paul saith, " How knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife ? or how knowest thou, O woman, whether thou shalt save thy husband ? " Therefore let the best and more godly party be diligent in saving (by his or her labours) the party that is not instructed nor persuaded in the truth. If it prevail, then is the worse part amended, and the best part hath done his or her duty and office, as it is commanded. Ephes. iv. Colos. iii. 1 Peter, iii.

In case the worse part will not be amended, but tarry still in error, and so offend the Almighty God the author of marriage, let the best part that is persuaded and knoweth the truth, as, in this case, the woman, labour with her companions to be free and at

" What remaineth after the consecration in the sacrament, any bread or no ? "

" No bread at all," saith he.

" And when ye break it, what do ye break ; whether bread or the body ? " saith Master Hooper.

" No bread," saith the friar, " but the body only."

" If ye do so," saith Master Hooper, " ye do great injury, not only to the body of Christ, but also ye do break the Scriptures, which say ; ye shall not break of him one bone."

With that the friar, having nothing belike to answer, recoiled back, and with his circles and crosses began to use exorcisms against Master Hooper, as though the devil had been present in the place.

liberty, and not to be compelled to honour any false God, or to serve God otherwise than she knoweth she may do with a good conscience, as she is taught by the word of God. And if she may thus obtain to be at liberty, and be not compelled to do things against her conscience, she may not in any wise depart from him that she is married unto. If this woman cannot win her husband to the truth, nor obtain to live freely and at liberty in the faith of Christ herself, let her cause some godly and grave man or woman to persuade with her husband, as well for his own better knowledge, as for the freedom and liberty of herself, and let her, and whosoever entreateth of the matter, use modesty, soberness, and charity, and pray unto God that their doings may take virtuous and godly success.

In case (which God forbid) the husband would not reform himself of his error, nor suffer his wife to refrain the company and fellowship of such as be present at the mass, where an idol is honoured for God: this wife must make answer soberly and christianly, that she is forbidden by God's laws to commit idolatry, and that God is more to be obeyed than man, and so in any case beware she offend not against the first commandment, which is, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me."

It may come to pass, that when the husband shall perceive the wife's love and reverence towards him, and also her constancy and strength in the truth and true religion of God, although he be not converted unto the truth by her, yet he will be contented to suffer her to use the liberty of her conscience, without compulsion to any religion that she doth by God's word detest and abhor. But if there be no remedy, but either the wife must follow in idolatry her husband's commandment, or else suffer the extremity of the law: here must the wife remember.

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and learn whether there be any law or not, that can compel her ordinarily to come to the mass, where idolatry is committed. If there be no law or other means to compel her than her husband's foul words, which be nothing else but threatenings to put her in fear, she must, if she can with wisdom and womanhood, amend the same: if she cannot, then must she christianly and patiently bear them as a woman of God, that for his sake must suffer as much, as his pleasure is to lay upon her.

In case there be a law to compel her and all others, if otherwise she will not obey, to come to the mass: first, she must wisely and discreetly weigh her husband's nature, whether he is wont to be in deed, works, and offers, cruel as he is in words. If she can find that his nature is (as the most part of men be) more churlish and cruel in words than in works, then howsoever he threateneth by dangerous words, he will not accuse his wife to harm her, but rather excuse her. In case either for lack of love, or for fear of losing of his goods, she perceive verily that he mindeth to bring her in danger by a law: then must she pray to God, and use one of these extreme remedies. First, if she find by prayer herself strong to abide the extremity of the law, yea, though she should die, let her in no case depart from her husband. In case she finds herself too weak to suffer such extremity, then rather than to break company and marriage between God and her, conjoined by the precious blood of Christ, she must convey herself into some such place, as idolatry may be avoided.

For if the husband love the wife, or the wife the husband, more than Christ, he nor she be not meet for Christ. Matt. x. 16. Luke, xiv. 9. Yea, if a man love his own life more than Christ, he is not meet for Christ. And what doth it avail a man to

win all the world and to lose his soul. But here the woman must take heed, that in case, for the keeping of the marriage between God and her, she departs from her husband; that she be always in honesty, virtuous; and godly company, that she may at all times have record for her godly behaviour; if any thing should be laid to her charge, and let her live a sole, sober, and modest life, with prayer and soberness to God, that it may please him to banish such wicked laws and wicked religion, as make debate between God and man, and husband and wife; and then God shall from time to time give counsel to every good man and woman, what is best to be done in such pitiful cases, to his honour and to the salvation of our woful and troubled conscience.

Out of the Fleet by the prisoner of the Lord,
JOHN HOOVER.

A Letter sent to the Christian Congregation, wherein he proveth that true Faith cannot be kept secret in the Heart without Confession thereof openly to the World when Occasion serveth.

St. Paul, in the 10th chapter to the Romans, annexeth the faith of Christ in the heart, with the confession of the mouth, so that the one (it seemeth by him) can be no more without the other; than fire can be without heat, saying these words: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth he confesseth unto salvation;" wherein he declareth, that even as the cause of our acceptance through Christ, is the confidence and faith of the heart in the promises of God: so is the confession outwardly of the same faith by the mouth, the fruits that all Christian faithful hearts bring forth through the same gifts of God. And where this effect of confession of faith is not, there wanteth also

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the cause of confession, which is true faith : for as the tree is known by her fruits, so is faith by her effects. And as the want of fruit is a demonstration that the tree is unprofitable : so the want of true confession of faith, is a token that the faith is dead. The end of the unprofitable tree is cutting down and casting into the fire : the end of fruitless faith is death and casting into eternal damnation.

Wherefore St. Peter requireth us to make answer to every man that demandeth of us, of such hope as is in us, with gentleness and reverence, which is a very testimony that we sanctify God in our hearts, as it is before expressed in the same chapter. For the greatest honour that man can give to God, is to confess in the time of trouble, truly and faithfully his holy word and faith. Wherefore it is the duty of every Christian, to pray and study to have a thorough knowledge of his faith in Christ ; and as the glory of God shall require, and the cause of his religion, to be ready to make answer for the same (howsoever the world, fear, displeasure, friendship, or other lets shall move us to the contrary), upon pain, saith Christ in the 10th of Matthew, that I will deny him before any Father which is in heaven. But how hard a thing it is to confess Christ in the day of trouble, not only the Scripture, but also daily experience in good men and women doth declare. True confession is warded on every side, with many dangers, on the right hand and on the left, now with fair means, then with foul threatenings, fearful and dangerous : as it is said by Christ our Saviour, " They shall betray you to the judges, and of them ye shall be betrayed and judged to death." Of the other side shall pull us back, the love of wife, children, brother, sister, kin, friends, and the love unto ourselves. But he that is overcome by any of these

means, hath his judgment: he is not meet for me, saith Christ.

These things be impossible unto men, yet to Christian men, in Christ possible, and so necessary, that Christianity and true religion cannot be in him, that is afraid to confess Christ and his Gospel in the time of persecution. The wisdom of the world doth say, "Although I accomplish the desire of my friends, and to the sight of the world am present at the mass, and with my body do as other men do, or as I may do; yet my heart is clean contrary to their belief, and I do detest such idolatry, and believe that the thing that I am present at is mere idolatry and abomination."

Here be fair words for an evil purpose, and pretended excuse, for a just condemnation before God. For if it be true that ye know the thing which ye resort unto, to be the dishonour of God, why do ye honour it with your presence? If ye know it to be evil, why refrain ye not from it? If your conscience say, it is idolatry, why serveth your body such things as your faith abhorreth? If in your heart you know but one God, why with your exterior presence serve ye the thing that ye know is not God? If your faith see idolatry, why doth your silence confess and allow the same? Two men in one, God loveth not. If the inward man know the truth, why doth the outward man confess a falsehood? If your spirit be persuaded that the mass is idolatry, why do ye with your bodily presence use it as a God and give godly honour to it? Do ye not perceive that it is written, Isaiah, xxix. Matt. xv. "These people honour me with their mouths, but their hearts be far from me?" The cause why God was offended with these people, was that outwardly they confessed him and served him, but their hearts were far from him inwardly. Wherefore, ye may see what it is to bear two faces in one

hood, outwardly to serve God, and inwardly to serve the devil. Now mark of this place, if it be so horrible and damnable a thing to be false in the heart, which none knoweth but God, and is worthy also of damnation: what is to be judged of the outward and manifest use of idolatry, which not only God, but also every good man knoweth and abhorreth?

There is no colour nor cloked hypocrisy, that God can away with. If the heart think not as the tongue speaketh, or else the tongue speak otherwise than the heart thinketh, both be abominable before God. Read ye the 3d and the 6th chapters of the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, where St. Paul saith: "Know ye not that your body be the temple of the Holy Ghost? If your body be the temple of the Holy Ghost, what agreement hath it with idolatry?" Can one body at one time be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and be present at such idolatry as God abhorreth and detesteth? Can a man serve two masters? If he do, he loveth (as Christ saith) the one and hateth the other. As God requireth of a faithful man a pure heart; even so requireth he that his external profession in all things be according thereto, for both body and soul be debtors unto God, and he redeemed them both.

The word of God saith unto us, "Glorify and bear God in your bodies." If we be present at such idolatry as God forbiddeth, and our own knowledge in conscience is assured to be evil, do we glorify God in our bodies? No doubtless, we dishonour him, and make our bodies the servants of idolatry, not only to God's dishonour, but also to the great danger both of body and soul. For this is a true saying of St. Austin, "He that doth against his conscience, buildeth to hell fire."

It is not enough for a Christian man to say, I know the mass is naught; but to obey civil laws and

orders, I will do outwardly as other men do, yet in my heart abhor it, and never think it to be good. Doubtless these two minds, the spirit to think well and the body to do evil, in this respect be both naught, and God will spew the whole man out of his mouth, as he did the minister of the congregation of Laodicea. Rev. iii.

The 8th chapter, and the 10th of the first to the Corinthians in this matter and in this time, be places very much expedient to lead and govern the judgment of every Christian man: where we may see that the Corinthians indeed had knowledge, and perceived right well that neither the idols amongst them, neither the meat dedicated unto the idols, were any thing, and passed as light of both, as of things of nothing, and upon that knowledge used to be present and also to eat at the feast, and of the meats dedicated unto idols. Wherewithal Paul was so sore offended, that he gave this sentence: "If a man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at table in the idols' temple, shall not the conscience of him that is weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died. Now when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." This judgment of Paul is more to be followed, than all our own feigned and wretched defences, which would fain seem to do well, when we halt on both sides, which God abhorreth. Paul hath a profound and deep consideration of that man's fault that hath knowledge, and perceiveth his dissimulation to be dangerous and perilous to all persons which he dwelleth withal.

First, such as be of a right and stayed judgment and will not prostrate their bodies to an idol, do condemn, and needs must, such dissimulation. The

very idolaters themselves have a defence of their abomination, by the presence of him that the Christian congregation knoweth to have knowledge. The weaker sort that would gladly take the best way, by a dissembler halting and playing of both hands, embraceth both in body and in soul, the evil that he abhorreth in his heart; and though he have knowledge, yet with his presence he esteemeth it as others do which have no knowledge. If St. Paul said, that the weak brother doth perish for whom Christ died, by him that abuseth knowledge in meats and drinks that of themselves be indifferent: how much more by the knowledge of him that useth manifest idolatry forbidden of God as a thing not indifferent? Take heed what St. Paul meaneth, and what he would prove against this man which had knowledge, that neither the idols neither the meats dedicated to idols were any thing. Forsooth this would he prove: that a poor man that wanteth knowledge by the example of him that hath knowledge, doth there adventure to do evil, which he would not do in case he saw not those that he had good opinion of to go before him as authors of the evil. And indeed the ignorant people, or those that be half persuaded in a truth, yea, or else thoroughly persuaded what is evil, when they have any notable man or woman for an example to follow, they think in following of them, they be excused, yea although per adventure they do it against their consciences: as y may see how many good men by the example of Peter began to dissemble, yea, Barnabas himself the Apostle of the Gentiles.

But how great offence is this before God, so to make a doubtful conscience or striving against knowledge to do any thing that is not godly, let the judgment of men pass, and measure it from God's word Christ saith, It were better a millstone were hange

about such an offender's neck, and cast into the sea. And doubtless the pain must be the greater, because we give offence willingly, and against our own consciences: and this before God is a wicked knowledge that causeth another to perish. Wo be unto him that is learned to bring his brother to destruction. Doth a Christian man know the truth to bring his brother to a lie? For these weaklings that we make to stumble, Christ died, as St. Paul saith. God defend we should confirm any man's conscience in evil. Let every man of God weigh with himself the doctrine of St. Paul, that commandeth us to fly idolatry.

And mark what St. Paul in that place calleth idolatry. It is to be seen plainly that he speaketh not of such idolatry as men that lack knowledge in their hearts what God is and what God is not, do commit. For in the eighth chapter before he saith, that men know that the idols were no gods, and that although by name the Gentiles had many gods, yet they knew that there was but one God. Therefore he meaneth nothing by this commandment, Flee idolatry, but to avoid such rites, ceremonies, and usages, as outwardly were used in the honour and reverence of the idols that were no gods, and weighing the right use of the Lord's supper and the dignity thereof, with the manner and use of the Gentiles towards their gods, he would bring the church of the Corinthians to understand how that, as the divine and sacred rites, ceremonies, and use of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, did sanctify him and declare him that used it to be the servant and child of God: so did the rites and sacraments of the Gentiles defile the users thereof, and declared them to be the servants and children of the idol, notwithstanding that they knew in their hearts that the idol was nothing. God by his sacrament doth couple us unto him: let us pray therefore to him that we pollute not our-

selves with any rites, ceremonies, or usages not instituted by God, and so divide ourselves from him.

In this cause, if a faithful man should be at the mass, it is to be considered with what mind those that he doth there accompany himself withal, do come thither, and what the end is of the work that the priest doth. The people come to honour the bread and wine for God, and the priest purposeth to consecrate both God and man, and so to offer Christ to the Father for remission of sin. Now do they, that adjoin themselves unto these people, profess and declare a society and fellowship of the same impiety, as St. Paul laid to the Corinthians' charge. St. Paul was not offended with the Corinthians, because they lacked knowledge of the true God, but because, contrary to their knowledge, they associated themselves with idolaters. For this is true, that in all rites, sacraments, and honourings, whether they be of God or of the devil, there is a profession of a communion: so that every man protesteth to be of the same religion, that the rest be of, that be partakers with him. I know there be many evasions made by men, that judge a man may with safeguard of conscience be at the mass. But forasmuch as M. Calvin, M. Bullinger, and others have thoroughly answered them: such as be in doubts, may read their books. This is my conscience after God's word.

JOHN HOOPER.

A

DECLARATION OF CHRIST

AND OF

HIS OFFICE.

COMPILED BY

JOHN HOOPER.

A. D. 1547.

“ *Hæc est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene conplacuit, ipsum audite.*”

“ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.”

DECEMBER 1942

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ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION

HI

DEDICATION.

To the most noble and victorious Prince, EDWARD Duke of SOMERSET, Earl of Hertford, Viscount Beauchamp, Lord Seymour, Governor of the person of the King's Majesty, and Protector of all his realms, his Lieutenant-general of all his armies, both by land and by sea, Treasurer and Earl Marshal of England, Governor of the Isles of Guernsey and Jersey, and Knight of the most noble order of the Garter : John Hooper wisheth grace and peace with long and gracious life in the living God through Christ Jesus, our only Saviour.

The godly pretence and consideration of your warfare of late into Scotland, most gracious and victorious Prince, and the just occasion given by your enemies to use the force of your most mighty and virtuous army, the Lord hath so magnified with prosperous and victorious success, that it seemeth not only a victory, most noble and worthy of perpetual memory ; but also to be esteemed as a singular favour and merciful benediction of God, given from heaven, who accustometh many times unto such a godly pretenced purpose, to annex and add an external sign and testimony of his good will ; that the world should not only acknowledge him to be the God of battle, and say, " This thing is done by the Lord, and is wonderful in our eyes ;" but also remember that thus the Lord useth to bless such, as fear his name, both in war and in peace.

And as every godly and good man doth praise the divine Majesty of God for his inestimable favour and grace in this heavenly victory : so he is to be called upon always hereafter to follow your Grace with like aid and consolation, that the thing, godly begun, may take a gracious and blessed success, the old

amity and friendship be restored, that God by the creation of the world appointed to be in that one realm and island, divided from all the world by the imparking of the sea, by natural descent of parentage and blood, one in language and speech, in form and proportion of personage one, one in manner and condition of living, and the occasion of all discord and hatred be banished, that the good Scottish-Englishman may confess and do the same at home, that he doth in foreign and strange countries; calling an Englishman always his countryman, and studious to do him pleasure before any other nation of the world. The breach of this divine and natural friendship is the very work of the devil by his wicked members, that have not taught Scotland only disobedience unto her natural and lawful Prince and superior power, the King's Majesty of England; but also the contempt of Christ and his most holy word. Through all the world their iniquity and malice is fulfilled, and God's mercy sufficiently declared. For seeing they will not repent, he revengeth their injustice with his most dreadful ire, not only extenuating their force and diminishing their strength; but also he infatuateth and turneth into foolishness their most prudent and circumspect counsels. As it appeared in this battle, where God used your Grace as a means to your immortal renown, to obtain a glorious and celestial victory against his enemies and yours, that were not only match and equal in force with your army, but also treble, or at the least double in number, as strangers report, at the first onset. A gracious and good beginning at the first brunt of your Grace's godly vocation unto so high honour, not only to defend the King's Majesty's most noble person and the realm, but also to better and perfect the crown, if God will, in reconciling the unnatural and ungodly hatred between two

members of one body, which of right and office should be as the right hand and the left, in peace and amity, to resist and withstand the force of all strange and foreign assault and violence.

And as this victory and triumph is to be rejoiced at, so then, why God gave it, is most diligently to be considered, who giveth the upper hand in the world to godly princes, because his afflicted church should have some place to rest itself in, and the kingdom of God to be amplified in truth and verity. The effect thereof must be followed, that as well the ministry of the church be enriched with the word of God, as the civil kingdom with worldly honour; as I am assured your most noble Grace right well knoweth. Notwithstanding, because the right of every just and lawful heir is half lost and more, when his title and claim are unknown, I have written this little book, containing what Christ is, and what his office is; that every godly man may put to his helping hand to restore him again unto his kingdom, and I have dedicated the same unto your noble Grace, unto whom God hath not only committed the defence of a politic and civil realm, but also the defence of his dear Son's right, Jesus Christ, in the church, who hath sustained open and manifest wrong these many years, as it appeareth by his evidence and writings, the Gospel sealed with his precious blood.

And whereas I cannot make his cause and right as plain as it meriteth, nor as it is decent for him, that would offer and prefer any matter to so prudent and mighty a Prince; my good-will and diligence is accepted of God in Christ, I doubt not, though it be very little that I can do; and trust likewise that for the merits of this simple and manifest verity your Grace will pardon my bold enterprise, and accept this poor work in good and gracious part. And then

it shall appear, that your most noble puissance is con-
joined with like clemency and mercy, the which
virtue of all others causeth man most to resemble the
Almighty God, that made not only all things for his
mercy's sake, but likewise with mercy, overcame him-
self and his rigorous justice also, that the defaults of
mortal man might find solace in Jesus Christ, his
only Son, who preserve the King's Highness, your
most noble Grace, with all the council and the whole
realm, to the glory of God. Amen.

Your Grace's most humble orator,

JOHN HOOBER.

Tiguri, 8 Decembris, 1547.

CHAPTER I.

FORASMUCH as Almighty God, of his infinite mercy and goodness, prepared a mean, whereby Adam and his posterity might be restored again unto their original justice and perfection, both of body and soul, and to live eternally unto the same end that they were created for, to bless and magnify for ever the immortal and living God ; it is the office of every true Christian, before all other studies, travails, and pains, that he shall sustain for the time of this brief and miserable life, to apply himself with all diligent force and labour to know perfectly this mean, ordained by God for our salvation ; and, the thing once known, diligently with heart, soul, and mind, to follow the mean, until such time as the effect and end be obtained, wherefore the mean was appointed. The mean was shewed unto Adam at his first and original transgression, the Seed of a woman, which should break the head of the serpent, destroy the kingdom of the devil, and restore Adam and as many as knew and believed in this Seed, unto life everlasting. And as the sin of Adam, the only occasion of all man's misery, was deriyed unto all his posterity, and made subject unto death and the ire of God for ever : so was this Seed from the beginning a very true and sufficient remedy to as many as believed ; and God, for his promise sake, acquitted and delivered man from the right and claim of the devil, and by mercy restored the place, that was by malice and contempt lost. He, that would consider diligently these two things, the sin of Adam, and the mercy of God, should find himself far unable to express, or sufficiently think the greatness of the one, or of the other, when they are so far passing the reason and understanding of man. All the solace and joy of Adam's posterity consisteth solely and only in this

(Rom. v.), "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound:" the benefits and merits of this Seed abound and are more available before the judgment of God, than sin, the flesh, the devil, and the world. This treasure and inestimable riches must be perfectly known of every person, that will be saved. It is only in Christ and in the knowledge of him, what he is and what is his office.

CHAPTER II.

What Christ is.

He is the Son of the living God and the perpetual Virgin Mary: both God and man, the true Messiah, promised unto man from the beginning of his fall. Whom St. John calleth the Word of eternal essence and divine majesty, saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John, i.) St. Paul (Col. i.) calleth him "the image of God, &c." and (Heb. i.) "the brightness of God." The creed of Nice calleth him "light of light," the natural Son of God, in whom dwelleth the fountain of all divinity naturally, as Paul saith (Col. ii.), "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" meaning, that he is not the Son of God by adoption or acceptation into grace, as Abraham, David, and other holy saints: but naturally the Son of God, equal with the Father in all things, as John saith, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." So doth St. John prove him in all his writings to be the very true and everlasting God, and not, as Ebion and Cerinthus said, that he was but very man only: he was made mortal man, as John saith, "And the Word was made flesh," to save the damned man from immortal death: and to be a mediator and intercessor unto God for man. (Matt. xi. John, iii. Isa. xi.)

This Scripture doth not only teach us the knowledge of salvation, but doth comfort us against all the assaults, subtilties, and crafts of the devil, that God would of his inestimable love rather suffer his only Son to die for the world, than all the world should perish. Remaining always, as he was, very God immortal, he received the thing he was not, the mortal nature and true flesh of man, in the which he died, as Peter saith, (1 Pet. iv.) Irenæus hath these godly words: "*Christus fuit crucifixus & mortuus, quiescente verbo, ut crucifigi & mori posset.*" The divine nature of Christ was not rent, or torn, or killed, but it obeyed the will of the Father. It gave place unto the displeasure and ire of God, that the body of Christ might die. Being always equal with his Father, he could, if he had executed his divine power, have delivered this body from the tyranny of the Jews.

These words of Irenæus do wonderfully declare unto us what Christ is, and agree with Paul (Phil. ii.), "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant:" seeing, he was sent into the world to suffer this most cruel death and passion, he would do nothing that should be contrary to his vocation, but, with patience praying for his enemies, submitted himself unto the ignominy and contempt of the cross; suffering pains innumerable without grudge or murmur against the holy will of his Father: his Godhead hiding itself, until the third day, when it restored the soul again unto the body, and caused it to rise with great triumph and glory (Rom. i. Matt. xxviii. John, xx. Luke, xxiv. Mark, xvi.), repeating the doctrine, that before his death he preached unto the world, that he was both king and

“ This is my dear beloved Son, in whom I delight, hear him.” He taught the will of his Father unto the world, and how they might be saved from death infernal (John, xvii. 6. Matt. xi. 5, 6, 7), so that they repented and believed the Gospel. (Matt. iii. Mark, x.) He left nothing untaught, but, as a good doctor, manifested unto his audience all things necessary for the health of man. As the woman confessed (John, iv.), “ Messias, when he is come, will tell us all things.” He preached not only himself, but sent his Apostles and disciples to manifest unto the world, that the acceptable time of grace was come, and the sacrifice for sin born into the world. (Matt. x. John, x.) And after his resurrection he gave them commandment to preach, and likewise what they should preach. “ Go ye unto all the world, and preach the Gospel, which I have taught you, to every creature.” (Matt. xxviii. Mark, xvi.) The which doctrine Luke thus expoundeth : “ That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” (Luke, xxiv.) “ In his name,” that is to say, “ in the knowledge and faith of his merits they should preach repentance and remission of sin unto all the world : as they did most sincerely and plainly without all glosses or additions of their own invention, and were as testimonies of the truth, and not the authors thereof.” (Acts, i. John, i.)

So doth Paul teach with gravity and manifest words, what is to be judged of himself and all other ministers : “ God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them : and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” (2 Cor. v.) Always in their doctrine they taught the thing, that Christ first taught, and God’s holy

Spirit inspired them. (Gal. i. 3. 2 Cor. iii.) Holy Apostles never took upon them to be Christ's vicar in the earth, nor to be his lieutenant: but said, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. iv.) In the same Epistle he bindeth the Corinthians to follow him in nothing but where he followed Christ (chap. xi.), "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." They ministered not in the church, as though Christ were absent, although his most glorious body was departed corporally into the heavens above; but as Christ present, that always governed his church with his Spirit of truth, as he promised (Matt. xxviii.), "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

In the absence of his body, he hath commended the protection and governance of his church unto the Holy Ghost, the same God, and one God with the Father and his divine nature. Whose divine puissance and power overmatcheth the force of the devil, so that hell itself cannot take one of Christ's flock out of God's protection. (John, x.) And this defence dureth not for a day, nor year, but shall demour (remain) for ever, till this church be glorified at the resurrection of the flesh. (John, xv.)

It was no little pain that Christ suffered in washing away the sins of this church: therefore he will not commit the defence thereof unto man. It is no less glory to defend and keep the thing won by force, than it is by force to obtain the victory. Adam, Abraham, Moses, or Aaron, could not win this church out of the devil's tyranny: no more can they defend it, when delivered. For although by imputation of Christ's justice those men and all other faithful ones be delivered from the tyranny of the devil and condemnation of the law: yet had and hath the devil his very friends dwelling within the

corrupt nature of man, as long as he liveth. The concupiscence and rebellion of man's nature ceaseth not day or night to betray man again to the devil, except with the motion of true penitence this concupiscence be kept under in fear and faith; which two virtues are so infirm in man, that be he never so perfect, yet falleth he from God sometime, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Aaron. (Isa. xliii. Num. xix.) Therefore he keepeth the defence and governance of the church only and solely himself, in whom the devil hath not a jot of right. Though the Apostles were instructed in all truth, and left the same written unto his church; yet were they ministers, servants, testimonies, and preachers of this verity, and not Christ's vicars in earth and lieutenants to keep the keys of heaven, hell, and purgatory: but only appointed to approve the thing to be good, that God's laws commanded; and that to be ill, that the word of God condemned.

Seeing that Christ doth govern his church always by his holy Spirit, and bindeth all the ministers thereof unto the sole word of God, what abomination is this, that any bishop of Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, or elsewhere, should claim to be Christ's vicar in earth, and take upon him to make any laws in the church of God to bind the consciences of man, beside the word of God; and, in placing of their superstition and idolatry, put the word of God out of his place! By what law, by whom, or where, hath any this title given unto him, to be God's vicar and lieutenant upon the earth?

Moses, the best prince that ever was, and most godly governor of the people; Aaron, that faithful high priest and preacher of God's word, never usurped this title, to be as a second Christ and master over men's consciences. If godly Moses and his brother Aaron never claimed this title in the earth, doubt,

less, it is a foul and detestable arrogance, that these ungodly bishops of Rome attribute unto themselves to be the heads of Christ's church, and the more it is to be lamented. He, that considereth their life, and conferreth it with the Scripture, will judge by the authority thereof, that they were not for these many years worthy to be accounted any members of God's church, but the members of the devil, and the first begotten of antichrist.

This is true, the See of Rome is not only a tyranny and pestilence of body and soul, but the nest of all abomination. God give him grace and all his successors to leave their abomination, and to come unto the light of God's word! This beast is preached unto the people to be a man, that cannot err; his authority to be above God and his laws; and to be the prince upon the earth of all princes. But God will judge him, as he is a murderer of both body and soul, and punish the princes of the world, that uphold his abomination.

Moses and Aaron, by the testimony of the Scripture, never taught, but that which they received of God, and at the last they both offended (Num. xx.): insomuch, that God gave sentence against them, that neither of them should enter into the land of promise for their arrogance and pride. The text saith, "Because ye were unfaithful unto me." This false belief was not of any doubt they had in the power of God; for the miracle was done, as God said: but that they attributed too much unto their own power, and said: "Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?" For the changing of the *third* person in this sentence into the *first*, the ire of God pronounced sentence of death against these two very godly ministers of his word. They sinned, because they said not; "Hear, ye rebellious, cannot Jehovah, the Omnipotent, give you

water out of this stone?" And is this first begotten of antichrist, the Bishop of Rome, without sin, that changeth not only the person in a sentence, but the whole sentence, yea, the whole law of God and of man? So that he reigneth in the conscience above the law of God, and will save him, that God hath damned, and damn him, that God hath saved; yet this person and man of sin cannot err!

But he, that spared not to kill good Moses and Aaron for the abuse of the word of God, will not favour this wicked man, nor any of his *holy* doctors, at the terrible day of judgment.

Nahum, the Prophet, doth give God a wonderful name, which the Latin and Greek cannot properly express without circumlocution, as if he retained a remembrance of injuries, and reserved the occasion of vengeance. He is the God, that writeth all these blasphemies in his book of remembrance, and when he hath shewed his mercy sufficiently, he revengeth the evil, that man thinketh is forgotten. It is of his superabundant mercy, that he throweth not suddenly fire upon the world for sin; and not that he is asleep, or cannot do it. Right well judged Valerius Maximus, better than now the most part of Christian men: "The divine wrath proceedeth with slow pace to its vengeance. But it will make up for its slowness by the weight of punishment."

Because God hath given this light unto my countrymen, which be all persuaded, or else God send them to be persuaded, that the Bishop of Rome nor any other is Christ's vicar upon the earth; it is no need to use any long or copious oration; it is so plain, that it needeth no probation; the very properties of antichrist, I mean of Christ's great and principal enemy, are so openly known to all men, that are not blinded with the smoke of Rome, that they know him to be the beast, that John describeth in

the Apocalypse, as well as the logician knoweth that "man is distinguished from other animals by the faculty of laughter."

This knowledge of Christ's supremacy and continual presence in the church admitteth no lieutenant nor general vicar. Likewise it admitteth not the decrees and laws of men, brought into the church contrary unto the word and Scripture of God, which is only sufficient to teach all verity and truth for the salvation of man, as it shall appear in this chapter following.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Authority of the Word of God.

Christ, the only light of the world, sent from his Father, and born mortal man, according unto the Scripture, began to teach the word of God purely and sincerely unto the world, and chose ministers and apostles convenient for the expedition thereof, and approved to be the very Messias by God, the Father (Matt. iii. 17. John, v.), taught his disciples the truth by the only law wrote by Moses and the Prophets, and not by unwritten verities. And in all controversies and doubtful questions he answered his contrariants by the word of God. In that wonderful temptation of the devil (Matt. iv.), by collation of the places of Scripture he killed the devil with his own sword, falsely and in a wrong sense alleging the word of God, by the word of God godly applied.

When his disciples were reprehended by the Pharisees, as breakers of the Sabbath (Matt. xii.), he excused their fact by the law, "Have ye not read what David did, and those which were with him?" So likewise (Matt. xv. 19) in all controversies he made the law judge between his enemies and him. When he was desired to teach a young man the way

to heaven, and to come to everlasting life, he said, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" (Matt. xxii.)

Likewise the Sadducees, that denied the resurrection of the dead. "Ye err (said he), not knowing the Scriptures and the word of God." The rich man in hell, that was so desirous that his brothers living in the earth might have knowledge and warning to beware they were not damned in time to come, would gladly have warned them himself, for a more surety (Luke, xvi.) that the message should be done. Abraham answered, "They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them." The Scripture teacheth what heaven, hell, and what man is, and what Christ is: therefore Christ sendeth us thither. (John, v.) "Search the Scriptures," said he.

Again, being required in a civil matter concerning tribute and obedience unto the princes of the world (Matt. xxii.), he said, "Give unto the emperor, that that is due unto the emperor, and unto God, that that is due unto God." And under the name of the emperor he understandeth all superior powers appointed over the people by God, and would us to give due honour unto them both, as Paul teacheth. (Rom. xiii. 1 Pet. ii.)

This law teacheth man sufficiently, as well what he is bound to do unto God, as unto the princes of the world. Nothing can be desired necessary for man, but in this law it is prescribed: of what degree, vocation, or calling soever he be, his duty is shewed unto him in the Scripture. And in this it differeth from man's laws, because it is absolute, perfect, and never to be changed; nothing to be added unto it, nor taken from it. And the church of Christ, the more it was and is burdened with man's laws, the farther it is from the true and sincere verity of God's word. The more man presumeth and taketh authority to interpret the Scripture after his

own brain and subtle wit, and not as the verity of the text requireth, the more he dishonoureth the Scripture and blasphemeth God, the author thereof.

It is the office of a good man to teach the church, as Christ taught, to revoke all errors, and bring back such as err, unto the fold of Christ only by the word of Christ. For the water at the fountain-head is more wholesome and pure, than when it is carried abroad in rotten pipes or stinking dishes. I had rather follow the shadow of Christ, than the body of all the general councils or doctors since the death of Christ. The devil never slept, but always by his ministers attempted to destroy the verity of Christ's religion, and clean to put out the light of truth, which was perfect in Christ's time and in the time of the Apostles. None since that time so pure. St. Jerome, *in vita Malchi*, saith, that his time was darkness in the respect of the Apostles' time.

The antiquity of the world doth darken the verity of God's word; as Varro saith the truth, "that age corrupteth and taketh away many things;" and "the third century doth not see the same man, which the first saw." The truth of God's verity, the more it is used, practised, and taught after the wisdom of man, the more is the glory and perfection thereof darkened. It is the contrary in all human arts, as Cicero saith: "In human discoveries nothing is invented and perfected all at once, but is improved by use and practice. So that the arts of every kind are the more advanced in excellence, the farther they are removed from their first origin and inventors."

The church of God must therefore be bound to no other authority than unto the voice of the Gospel and unto the ministry thereof, as Isaiah saith (chap. viii.), "Seal the law among my disciples." The Prophet speaketh of such darkness, as should follow his time, concerning the coming of Messias,

the true doctor of the church. Therefore he prayed to preserve the true heirs of the Prophets, and that it would please him to confirm the doctrine of truth in their hearts, lest the word and true understanding of the word by the devil should be put out. And seeing the church is bound unto this infallible truth, the only word of God, it is a false and usurped authority that men attribute unto the clergy, and bind the word of God and Christ's church to the succession of bishops or any college of cardinals, schools, ministries, or cathedral churches.

Paul would have no man to give faith to any person or minister in the church of God, but when he preacheth the word of God truly. (Gal. i.) Men may have the gift of God to understand and interpret the Scripture unto others, but never authority to interpret it, otherwise than it interpreteth itself, which the godly mind of man by study, meditation, and conferring of one place thereof with the other, may find; howbeit some more, some less, as God giveth his grace. For the punishment of our sins God leaveth in all men a great imperfection; and such as were endued with excellent wit and learning saw not always the truth. As it is to be seen in Basilus, Ambrose, Epiphanius, Austin, Bernard, and others, though they stayed themselves in the knowledge of Christ, and erred not in any principal article of the faith: yet they did inordinately and more than enough extol the doctrine and tradition of men, and after the death of the Apostles every doctor's time was subject unto such ceremony and man's decrees, as were neither profitable or necessary. Therefore diligently exhorted Paul the church of Christ principally to consider and regard the foundation of all verity; meaning that doctors of the church had their imperfection and faults. "Other foundation (saith he) can no man lay besides that which is laid,

which is Jesus Christ." In these few words is established all our faith, and all false religion reprehended.

Upon this foundation some men build gold, that is to say, godly and necessary doctrine. As Polycarp, that confuted the heresy of Marcion, "on the being of God;" of the causes of sin, that the devil and man is the cause of sin, and not God, or fatal destiny, nor the influence or respects of the planets. He maintained the true religion of God, and governed the church, as the Scripture taught, which he learned of John the Evangelist, and defended this truth with wonderful constancy and martyrdom.

Basil and many others retained the articles of the faith, but they instituted the life and rule of monks, and preferred that kind of life before the life of such, as govern in the commonwealth the people of God, and persuaded men that such kind of life was a very divine and acceptable honouring of God.

After him followed such as augmented this evil, and said, it was not only acceptable unto God, but also that men might deserve therewith remission of sin.

Thus a little and a little the devil augmented superstition, and diminished the truth of God's glory: so that we see no where the church of Christ, as it was in the Apostles' time. Though many and godly verities have been brought unto light in our time by men of divers graces, yet is not the truth of necessary verities plainly shewed by them. Lest man should too much glory in himself, he permitted them to err in certain points: as Luther, of blessed memory, who wrote and preached the Gospel of justification, no man better; yet in the cause of the sacrament he erreth concerning the corporal presence of Christ's natural body, that there is no man can err more. I shall have occasion to write the truth concerning

this matter hereafter. It is no reproach of the dead man, but mine opinion unto all the world, that the Scripture solely and the Apostles' church is to be followed, and no man's authority, be he Austin, Tertullian, or either cherubim or seraphim.

Unto the rules and canons of the Scripture must man trust, and reform his errors thereby, or else he shall not reform himself, but rather deform his conscience. The church of the Romans, Corinthians, and others, the seven churches that John writeth of in the Apocalypse, were in all things reformed unto the rule and form prescribed by the everlasting God. The image of these churches I always print in my mind. And wheresoever I come, I look how near they resemble those afore rehearsed, and whether their preachers preach simply without dispensation of any part of God's most necessary word: and whether all the occasions of idolatry be taken away, as images, which Gregory calleth the books of the laymen; though this title be against the second commandment, and never approved by the Old Testament nor the New, by word or example.

Where the occasion is not removed, the word of God must needs stand in hazard: for God will not (say the wisdom of man what it list) have his church pestered with any kind of idolatry; and to make God and the devil agree in one church, it is impossible. St. John hath wonderful words in the Apocalypse. (Chap. iii.) Unto the church of the Laodiceans: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." These words are very necessary to be borne in mind. For he, that is neither hot nor cold, but indifferent to use the knowledge of God's word and Christ's church with the word and gloss of man; and that teacheth

the use of images in the church, before he can prove by the authority of God's word that they may be suffered in the church, doth not well. They have been the occasion of great hurt and idolatry. The church of the Old Testament or the New never taught the people with images.

Therefore it shall be the office of every man that loveth God and his word to follow the Scripture only, and to bewail the ignorance of such, as have before our time, or now in our time, by words or writing defended the same; and with all humility and humbleness submit himself to the judgment and censure of the judge of all judges, the word of God, that he may wisely and godly discern what is to be believed and accepted of any doctor's writings, and what is not to be accepted; what is to be pardoned, and what is not to be pardoned; and by the perils and dangers of others learn to be wise, that we commit not the same fault.

A fine gloss and free interpretation cannot make good an ill thing. If I should say, an image provoketh devotion, holy water teacheth that the blood of Christ was sprinkled for my sins, the holy bread teacheth that Christ's body was torn for my sins, what shall these glosses excuse the fact? Nay, nay, Christ, that died for our sakes, would not his death to be preached this way, but out of the Scripture by the tongue of man, and not out of the decrees of bishops, by a drop of water or a painted post. He, that took the pains to die and suffer his passion for the redemption of the world solely and only, solely and only hath taken the pains to teach the world how and which way they should keep this passion in mind, and left it unto the world in writing by the hands of his holy Apostles: unto the which writing only he hath bound and obligated his church, and not to the writings of men.

In this passage I admonish the Christian reader,

that I speak not of the laws of magistrates or princes that daily ordain new laws for the preservation of their commonwealth, as they see the necessity of their realms or cities requires; but of such laws as men have ordained for the church of Christ, which should be now and for ever governed by the word of God. In this case, like as Eve offended, obeying the persuasion of the devil contrary unto the commandment of God; so doth every man offend, obeying any laws or decrees that command any thing contrary unto the word of God. This law must prevail, "We must obey God, rather than man." The example hereof we have in Daniel, of the three children, who chose rather to burn in the fiery furnace, than to worship the image that Nebuchadnezzar had made. So did the Apostles. (Acts, v.)

Let all the world consider, whether such laws of the bishops, as the mass, which is a profanation of Christ's supper to bind men's consciences to pray unto dead saints; to say, that images are to be suffered in the temples; and to constrain the ministers of the church to live sole, contrary to their vocation, are to be obeyed or not. They do no less offend God in obeying these laws, than Eve did in obeying the voice of the serpent. The wisdom of all the wits in the world cannot comprehend the greatness of this ill. Make what laws they will for the body, so they leave the conscience free, with patience it is to be suffered; only I lament the bondage of the conscience. Cursed be those, that make such laws, and cursed be those, that with sophistry defend them. That parasite and bondman of the Bishop of Rome, Pighius, in his writings shameth not to say, "It is less sin for a priest to keep another man's wife, than to have a wife of his own."

Concerning acts indifferent, which of themselves are neither good nor ill, as, to refrain from eating

of flesh on the Friday, observing of the feasts kept holy in the remembrance of such holy martyrs, as died for the faith of Christ, or in keeping holy, Easter and Whitsunday; there are two respects most diligently to be observed, the one good, and to be suffered; the other ill, and to be eschewed. Such, as abstain from flesh, and think they do better service to God, and would likewise obtain remission of their sins by those works, do declare both themselves and their works to be ill. But such, as abstain because the spirit may be more ardent, and the mind more given to study and prayer, do well, and as they be bound to do. And they, who come unto the temple to pray for themselves and the church of Christ, and to hear the word of God, do well. For, as God commandeth his word to be preached and heard, so he hath appointed a certain time, as the Sabbath, when people should hear it. And not only is this order to be observed in the church, but also in every family and household, of what degree soever they be. Each should cause his family and children to read some part of the Bible for their erudition, to know God. Likewise, he should constrain them to pray unto God for the promotion of his holy word and for the preservation of the governors of the commonwealth, so that no day should pass without prayer and augmentation of knowledge in the religion of Christ.

But our new Evangelists have another opinion; they dream of faith that justifieth, the which neither repentance precedeth, neither honesty of life followeth, which shall be to their double damnation, if they amend not. He, that will conform his knowledge unto the word of God, let him likewise convert his life withal, as the word requireth, and as all the examples of Christ and his Gospel teach; or else what will he do with the doctrine of Christ, which

only teacheth, and sufficiently teacheth, all verity and virtuous life? Let him tarry still in the doctrine of man, and live as manly and as carnally as he list, and not profess to know God, nor his truth, rather than so to slander them both. This sufficeth to prove the only word of God to be sufficient to teach the truth. All other men's laws be neither necessary nor profitable; and certain we be, that the church of the Apostles did want those decrees that Papistry of late days faithed the church withal.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Intercession of Christ.

The second office of Christ is to pray and to make intercession for his people. This office John writeth of in his first Epistle: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, that maketh intercession for us." And as Paul saith, "Christ, who was dead, yea, who is also raised again, who is even at the right hand of God: who also intercedeth for us." In his name, and in the belief and confidence of his merits, we may obtain the mercies of God and life everlasting, as Paul saith: "Let us draw nigh to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." This intercession of Christ only sufficeth. No man should seek any other Mediator of intercession or expiation of sin, as Paul saith, declaring the sufficiency and ability of Christ's death and intercession. "Christ remaineth for ever, having a perpetual priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him; being always living to this end, that he may intercede for them."

Unto this intercession and prayer in Christ's name he bound his church by express commandment: "Ask, and it shall be given you." And in the same place he sheweth the cause, wherefore it shall

be given. "Whatsoever ye ask in the belief and confidence of my merits, it shall be given unto you." St. Paul calleth Christ, sitting at the right hand of God, the minister and servant of the saints; that is to say, of such as be here living in this troubled and persecuted church, to solicit and do all their affairs, as a faithful ambassador with the Father of heaven, until the consummation of the world.

This doctrine of Christ's intercession must be always diligently preached unto the people; and likewise that in all necessities, calamities, and trouble, the afflicted person must seek none other means to offer his prayers unto God, but Christ only, according as the Scripture teacheth, and as we have example of holy saints in the same. Not only in the New Testament, where he commandeth us to pray in his name; and Stephen in his martyrdom commended his spirit unto this only Mediator, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." But also in the Old Testament thus prayed the Patriarchs and Prophets. Jacob, (Gen. xlviii.) "God and the angel who delivered me from all evil, bless these lads." And David, (Psa. lxxi.) "And they shall worship him alway." Forasmuch as Christ is daily in heaven, and prayeth for his church, the church of Christ must pray, as Christ hath taught it; as the Patriarchs, Prophets, and the Apostles have given us example, who never prayed unto dead saints; yea, as Christ hath given us example, hanging on the cross, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

What intolerable ill blasphemy of God and ethnick idolatry is this, to admit and teach the invocation of saints departed out of this world! It taketh from God his true honour: it maketh him as nothing, that only hath ordained Christ to be Mediator between man and him: it diminisheth the merits of Christ; taketh from the law of God her perfection

and majesty ; whereas God hath opened his will and pleasure unto the world in all things. It condemneth the old church of the Patriarchs and Prophets, likewise the church of the Apostles and martyrs, who never thought of the invocation of saints. It accuseth the Scripture of God to be false, which saith, " Thou shalt neither add, neither diminish any thing : " it maketh Christ a liar, who said, " The Spirit, whom I will send from the Father, he shall teach you all truth." If the men that teach, " Holy Mary, pray for us," be more holy, than all the Patriarchs or Prophets and Apostles, let the conscience of the Christian reader judge.

This distinction of mediators, to be one of expiation for sin, Christ ; and another of intercession, the saints departed, is naught : it repugneth the manifest text of the Scripture : it is the office only of Christ to be the mediator for sin, and likewise to offer the prayers of the church to his Father. (John, i.) " Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." As concerning intercession, he commandeth us only to ask in his name, and prescribed the manner how to ask, and what to ask. (Luke, xi.)

As for such as say, " If the saints, that we pray unto, hear us not, nor profit a deal, yet it hindereth not, we lose but our labour : " thus much it hindereth, it declareth him that prayeth, to be an infidel. To pray unto that god or goddess, who is not able to help him, nor hear his prayers, is to be no better than he, that prayeth unto the image of Jupiter in Crete, that had neither ears nor eyes. It declareth him to condemn both God and his word, who assureth every man, in every time, and in every distress, not only to hear him, but also to give aid. (Matt. xi.) So now this worshipper of saints departeth from the known and Almighty God to an unknown god, and

preferreth the doctrine of man and the devil before the Scripture of truth and the living God. I hope this detestable error is come to light, and all men taught to pray as the Scripture canonical teacheth.

But there is another ill as great as this, to be reprehended of all such as know how to pray aright, the being of images in the temple, which the world saith may be suffered in the churches, and saith they be good to put the people of God in remembrance of such godly saints as died for Christ's sake. But this is always the subtilty of the devil, when a manifest ill cannot be borne withal, to seek a gloss and interpretation, that where he cannot walk in the church openly like a devil, and have candles stuck before a post, and the images kissed, yet to desire some man to put a fair coat upon his back, that he may have a place in the church to lurk in, until such time as occasion be ministered to shew himself again as he is. The authority of God's word requireth me to pronounce this true judgment in the cause of images, that they be not worshipped in the church, that their presence in the church is against God's word, as well as to say, "Holy Mary, pray for us." And as the one is to be eschewed and banished out of the heart, so is the other out of the eye in the temple, where God's word is preached unto the people, and the sacraments ministered.

This I prove by the authority of both Testaments, the Old and the New. The Old saith, "Thou shalt make no image." (Exod. xx. Deut. vi.) In the New there is no mention made of any image, but that Christ concerning the law and precepts of the commandments said: "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil the law." (Matt. v.) Forasmuch as Christ left the commandments of the old law unto the church, in the which he saith, "Thou shalt not make any image;" from whence have these men

authority, that say, if any images be not honoured, they may be suffered in the church? It is but their opinion, contrary and beside the law of God. And this commandment, "Thou shalt not make"—"thou shalt not worship," forbiddeth as well the making of the image, as the honouring of it. Concerning the having of them in the place of public prayer and in the use of the sacraments, such as would have this occasion of idolatry to remain in the church, would pass over this second commandment, which saith, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, thou shalt not worship it;" and make of the tenth commandment two commandments. But the text will not suffer it. For as the Lord there forbiddeth the inward lust and concupiscence of his neighbour's house, so doth he forbid the lust and concupiscence of his neighbour's wife, servant, or daughter, and all is but one commandment (Exod. xx.): read the text in the Hebrew, and then it shall be more plain.

The second commandment, which the defenders of images neglect, forbiddeth not only the outward reverence and honour, but also by the same express commandment forbiddeth to *make* any image. They do injury to the manifest text, and their gloss is to be abhorred, and the plain text to be followed.

The King's Majesty, that dead is, willed not only all his true subjects to have no familiarity with Cardinal Poole, but also to refrain his company, and not to have to do with him in any case, and not without good and necessary consideration. He that would (notwithstanding this command of the King's Majesty) have haunted Poole's company, and at the time of his accusation have said he was not with Poole for friendship nor familiarity to do him any honour, but haunted his company with such other persons as meant no ill to the King's Majesty or his realm, doubtless this law should of right and equity con-

damn him (neither for friendship neither other cause any man should use his company). Doubtless, as the King's Majesty and every other prince knoweth it to be dangerous daily to suffer his subjects to be in the company of his traitorous enemies; so God knew right well what danger it was to suffer man, his creature, to have company with those idols, and therefore said, "Thou shalt neither worship them nor make them." All the princes of the earth have not had so many subjects betrayed and made traitors by their enemies, as God hath lost souls by the means of images: I make all the world judge that know the truth.

It is so childish an opinion to say that images may be suffered in the church, so they be not honoured, that it needeth no probation at all. The Gentiles, whom St. Paul speaketh of (Rom. i.), knew right well that the idol was not God. And all the idolaters that used images, that the New Testament speaketh of (1 Cor. v. and x. 1 Pet. iv. 1 John, v.), knew right well that those images of gold or silver were not the devil that they worshipped. The Apostles condemned not only their false religion, but also their images. John by express words calleth the image idolatry, and biddeth them beware of images, saying, "Keep yourselves from images." David (Psa. cxv.) saith, "The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold." He condemneth not only their false religion, but also the images made by the hand of man, which were of gold and silver. Their false god was neither gold neither silver, but a wicked spirit, who had entered for lack of faith into their spirits:

It is to be lamented, that God for our sins thus suffereth the world to be deluded by the devil. Of late years the images were in the temple, and honoured with *Paternoster*, heart and mind, with leg

and knee. This use of images is taken away in many places, but now they be applied to another use, namely, to teach the people and to be the laymen's books. As Damascene and many others say, Oh! blasphemous and devilish doctrine, to appoint the most noble creature of God, man endued with wit and reason resembling the image of the everlasting God, to be instructed and taught of a mute, dumb, blind, and dead idol. The brute beast that goeth by the way, and the ass that serveth for the mill, is not taught by the rod of the carter, but by the prudence of him that useth the rod; and should those painted blocks be the books of reasonable man? Full well can the devil transform himself into an angel of light, and deceive the people under the pretence of true religion. I had rather trust to the shadow of the church that the Scripture teacheth, than to all the men's writings since the death of Polycarp.

Christ saith not, "Go preach unto the people by images;" but said, "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel." (Matt. xxviii.) They say, that images adorn and seemly deck the temple of God; whereas the people resort to hear the word of God, so the more images the more dishonoured is the temple. First, let them teach by the manifest word of God, that the temple should be decked with such idols as cannot teach nor speak. Some man's tongue must declare the history of the idol, or else they know not what the idol is; peradventure, take St. Barbara for St. Catherine, and St. Concumbre for the rood of Paul; Balaam and his ass, that for lucre attempted to curse the church of God, for Christ and his ass that came to bless and sanctify his church with his precious blood. It is the abuse and profanation of the temple to suffer them, and a great occasion for people to return to their accustomed ill. I would all men should indifferently ponder these

reasons, and judge whether they be to be suffered or not.

First, the most perfect churches of the Prophets, Christ, and his Apostles, used no such means to instruct the people. We ought to follow them and the word of God written by the Prophets and Apostles. Also the Greek church never consented willingly to admit the use of images in the temples. The ill that hath happened unto the people by the means of images is too plain and well known—God by idolatry robbed of his glory, and the idolater disinherited of God's mercy, except he repent in this life. An image once brought into the church liveth a long time. Grant, that at the beginning there was a good preacher in the church, the preacher dieth, the idol the longer it liveth the younger it waxeth, as ye may see by the idols of Walsingham, Canterbury, and Hales. They flourished most a little before the desolation in the reign of the King's Majesty that dead is, Henry VIII. of a blessed memory. At their setting up I suppose the preachers were more diligent and zealous of God's glory than afterward. But was not the original damnable against the word of God, to give the people such a book to learn by, that should school them to the devil?

The words of Gregory to Serenus, Bishop of the Massilians, should move no man, though he say, "What the Scripture is to those that read: the same does the picture afford to the eyes of those who cannot:" and doth reprehend Serenus for the breaking of images, saying, the like was not seen done by any other minister. This is but St. Gregory's opinion. Epiphanius, writing in a certain epistle to John, Bishop of Jerusalem, willeth the occasion of ill to be taken out of the church, as Paul commandeth.

(1 Thess. v.) This doctor, as all men know, was of singular learning and virtue.

Again, against the authority of Gregory the Great, I set the authority of Athanasius the Great, who denieth by express words the images to be the books of the lay people. With great gravity and godly reasons this great clerk confuteth this fond opinion, images to be the books of the laymen.

The great clerk Lactantius crieth so out against images, that he saith there can be no true religion where they be. Tertullian, *De Corona Militis*, judgeth the same. The law of God doth not only condemn the use of them in the church, and these holy doctors, but also the name of an image declareth it to be an abomination.

Read all the Scripture, and in every place where thou findest this word, *ezeb*, idol or image; it signifies either affliction, rebellion, sorrow, sadness, travail or pain, or else the wicked *mu*k and mammon of the world, or the thing that always provoketh the ire of God, as Rabbi David Kymhy well expoundeth Psalm cxv. This Jew saith, that the idols bring men into hatred of God, expounding these words of David, "Like unto them are all they, that put their trust in them;" he saith, the text must be understood by the manner of prayer, as though David prayed Almighty God to make these gravers and carvers of images as dumb, as blind, as mute, and as insensible as the idol that can neither speak nor hear.

What should move men to defend in the church of Christ so unnecessary an ill and pestilent treasure, that hath seduced both our fathers and great-grand-fathers? whereas the church of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, never used them, but in all their writings abhorred them. Loved we God, we would be content with Scripture. Every scholar of Aristotle taketh this for a sufficient verity, "The

master saith so :” he will be contented as soon as he heareth his master’s name. Cicero (*lib. iii. De Oratore*) was thus persuaded of those that were excellent orators, “ and so esteems the suavity of Isocrates, the subtlety of Lysias, the acumen of Hyperides, the eloquence of Æschines, the power of Demosthenes, and the oratory of Catullus : that whatsoever, saith he, you add, or change, or take away, it will become thereby worse.” And should not the Patriarchs, Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, as well suffice the church of God ?

What although many learned men have approved of images, should their wisdom maintain any thing contrary unto the word of God ? No ; a Christian man must not care who speaketh, but what is spoken ; the truth is to be accepted, whosoever speaketh it, Balaam was as wise, learned, and replenished with God’s gift, as man could be ; notwithstanding, his ass telling the truth must be believed better than he. The law of God teacheth no use of images, but saith, “ Thou shalt not make, thou shalt not worship it” (*Exod. xx.*) : believe it. Yet the art of graving and painting is the gift of God. To have the picture or image of any martyr or others, so they be not put in the temple of God, nor otherwise abused, it may be suffered. Christ by the picture of Cæsar taught his audience obedience unto the civil prince, saying, *Cujus est hæc imago ? Cæsaris inquiunt. Ergo redde quæ sunt Cæsaris Cæsari* : “ Whose image is this ? They say to him, Cæsar’s : therefore render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s.”

But if man will learn to know God by his creatures, let him not say Good morrow, master, to an old moth-eaten post, but behold the heavens which declare the mighty power of God. Consider the earth, how it bringeth forth the fruits thereof, the water with fishes, the air with the birds. Consider

the disposition, order, and amity, that is between the members of man's body, the one always ready to help the other, and to save the other: the hand the head, the head the foot, the stomach to disperse the meat and drink into the external parts of the body. Yea, let man consider the hawk and the hound, that obey in their vocation, and so every other creature of the earth, and with true heart and unfeigned penitence come to the knowledge of himself, and say, "All the creatures that ever the living God made, obey in their vocation, saving the devil, and I, most wretched man."

Those things were made to be testimonies unto us of God's mighty power, and to draw men unto virtue, not these idols which the devil caused to be set in the temple to bring men from God. Thus did Christ teach the people his most blessed death and passion, and the fruit of his passion by the grain of corn cast into the earth. He hanged not the picture of his body upon the cross, to teach them his death, as our late learned men have done.

The ploughman, be he never so unlearned, shall better be instructed of Christ's death and passion by the corn that he soweth in the field, and likewise of Christ's resurrection, than by all the dead posts that hang in the church, or are pulled out of the sepulchre with, "Christ is risen." What resemblance hath the taking of the cross out of the sepulchre and going a procession with it, with the resurrection of Christ? None at all; the dead post is as dead, when they sing, "Now he is not dead," as it was, when they buried it with, "His grave is made in peace." If any preacher would manifest the resurrection of Christ unto the senses, why doth not he teach them by the grain of the field that is risen out of the earth, and cometh of the dead corn that he sowed in the winter? Why doth not the preacher

preach the death and resurrection of Christ by such figures and metaphors as the Scripture teacheth? Paul wonderfully (1 Cor. xv.) proveth with arguments the death and resurrection of Christ and ours likewise, that nothing may be more plainly taught.

A dead post carried in procession as much resembleth the resurrection of Christ, as very death resembleth life. People should not be taught either by images or by reliques, as Erasmus in his third book of *Ecclesiastes* well declareth. Lactantius useth a wonderful, divine, eloquent, and plain manner in the declaring of this resurrection, which is sung yearly in the church concerning Easter-day, with many godly and divine verses. The same Lactantius saith, that there can be no true religion where these images be. Austin ad Mercellum reprehendeth them wonderfully in these words of David, "Mouths have they, and speak not;" and saith men may be soon deceived by images. Likewise in the first book *De Consensu Evangelistarum*.

Such as defend them have nothing but sophistical arguments to blind the people with. The Scripture and the Apostles' church used none: as for Gregory the Great and Theodosius, with others that defend them, all the histories declare, that men of greater learning than they by the Scripture condemned them; as Leo III. the Emperor Constantinus V. who assembled all the learned men of Asia and Greece, and condemned the use of images, that Gregory and Martin the First had established. But it forceth not, had all Asia, Africa, and Europe, and Gabriel the archangel, descended from heaven, and approved the use of images. Forasmuch as the Apostles neither taught nor wrote of them, their authority should have no place. The word of God solely and only is to be preferred (Gal. i.), which forbiddeth images.

CHAPTER VI.

The third Office of Christ is concerning his Priesthood, to offer Sacrifice unto God, and by the same to purge the World from Sin.

Paul (Phil. ii.) saith, that Christ humbled himself unto the death of the cross. (Heb. ii.) He was made partaker of man's mortal nature, that by death he might destroy him that had the empire and dominion of death, that is to say, the devil. John calleth him the Lamb that doth take away the sin of the world. (John, i.) All the sacrifices of the old law were figures and types of this only sacrifice, which was appointed by God to die and to suffer the ire and displeasure of God for the sin of man, as though he himself were a sinner, and had merited this displeasure. The greatness of this ire, sorrow, confusion, ignominy, and contempt, neither angel nor man can express: his pains were so intolerable, and his passion so dolorous, his deity so obedient with the Father's will, that it was not only a sacrifice, but also a just recompense to satisfy for all the world solely and only, as Christ taught Nicodemus, John, iii. as Paul, Heb. vii. viii. ix. x. Isa. liii. and so all the Prophets and Patriarchs. And such a sacrifice as once for all sufficeth, Heb. vii.

These two offices of Christ should never be out of remembrance. They declare the infinite mercy of God, and likewise his indifferent and equal justice unto all creatures without respect of persons. The token of his mercy may be known in this, that he would not that all mankind should be lost, though in Adam all deserved eternal death. He opened his mercy unto Adam not only by word, but also by the fire that descended upon his sacrifices and his son's. So to Abraham, then to the world by the incarnation

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and death of his only Son, and the promise of grace and the promise of everlasting life unto such as repent and believe in him.

The sign of his ire and displeasure unto man is this, that he would not accept man again into his favour for any penance, any sorrow, any trouble, any adversity, any weeping, any wailing, nor for the death of any person, until his own Son, most dear beloved, by death appeased his displeasure, and became surety to satisfy the justice of God and the right that the devil had unto all mankind. This if man remembered as deeply and as earnestly as the matter requireth, it should make his heart full sorry, and bring him unto an honest and virtuous trade of life. It would bring him to consider this example of God's justice and equity in the appeasing of his own justly conceived ire, and likewise that he would do no wrong unto his mortal enemy the devil. Except the Son of God had been an equal and just redemption, a price correspondent to make amends and satisfy the fault and guilt of man's sin, God would not have taken one soul from the right and justice of the devil.

Now of this infallible truth, that Christ hath sacrificed only for sin, and his death is accounted only sufficient for the salvation of man, the church is aright instructed by two most necessary articles; first, of justification, and then of the right use of the sacrament of his holy body. Concerning justification thus the word of God teacheth.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Justification.

St. Paul, when he saith that we be justified by faith (Rom. iii. 4, 5), he meaneth that we have remission of sins, reconciliation, and acceptance into

other virtues be present, they cannot tell what they say. Every man that will have his conscience appeased, must mark these two things: *How* remission of sin is obtained, and *wherefore* it is obtained. Faith is the mean *whereby* it is obtained, and the cause *wherefore* it is received is the merits of Christ. Although faith be the means *whereby* it is received, yet hath neither faith, nor charity, nor contrition, nor the word of God, nor all those knit together, sufficient merits *wherefore* we should obtain this remission of sin. But the only cause *wherefore* sin is forgiven, is the death of Christ.

Now mark the words of Paul: "Freely," saith he, "we are justified by his grace." Let the man burn his heart with contrition, believe that God is good a thousand times, and burn in charity, yet shall not all these satisfy the law, nor deliver man from the ire of God, until such time as faith letteth fall all hope and confidence in the merits of such virtues as be in man, and say, "Lord, behold thy unfruitful servant; only for the merits of Christ's blood give me remission of sins; for I know no man can be justified otherwise before thee, as David saith, "No man living shall be justified in thysight." (Psa. cxliii.) And again, "Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth no sin." (Psa. xxxii.)

He that would mark Christ's communication with that nobleman and great clerk Nicodemus (John, iii.) should be satisfied *how* and *wherefore* man is justified so plainly, that no adversary of the truth should hurt this infallible verity, "Sole faith to justify." Nicodemus, having a good opinion, although not a sufficient knowledge of Christ, came unto him by night, and confessed him to be sent from God, and that because of such works and miracles as he had wrought. Christ made answer, "Truly, Nicodemus, I say unto thee, no man can see the kingdom

of God; except he be born from above." Nicodemus, not understanding what Christ meant, asked him how an old man could be born again, and whether he could enter his mother's womb, and then be born again. Christ bringeth him yet nearer unto the light, that he might know the means, and saith, "I tell thee truly, Nicodemus, that no man can enter the kingdom of God, except he be born of water and the Holy Ghost, &c."

Nicodemus confessed yet again his ignorance, and desired to be further instructed, saying, "How may these things be?" Christ answered, Art thou the great master and Rabbi in Israel, and yet ignorant of these things? Meaning, that great and horrible must the ignorance of the people be, when their doctors know not the truth. Nicodemus confessing his ignorance, and receiving reproach at Christ's hand, because he took upon him to teach others, and yet was a fool himself in the religion of God, might for shame have left Christ and his Gospel-yoke, because he now is made only a scholar, that before was for his prudence and learning the chief of the Jews, a Pharisee of most notable estimation. But Christ straightway comforteth him and all others, learned and unlearned, and saith, "No man ascendeth into heaven, except He that descended from heaven, the Son of man, which is in heaven." As though Christ had said thus: "Discomfort not thyself, Nicodemus, that although thou be a great learned man, yet ignorant of the way unto everlasting life. For I promise thee, there is no man, learned nor unlearned, that can of his own wit and learning ascend unto the knowledge of life everlasting, but only He that descended from heaven, the Son of man, which is in heaven."

Now Nicodemus, being destitute of all worldly and human prudence, and finding himself full unable

by wit or learning to follow the effect of, Christ's preaching concerning the means of salvation, dependeth only on the mouth of Christ, and disputeth no more the matter. Then Christ sheweth him the way, and maketh a ladder for Nicodemus, wherewith he may ascend into heaven, and saith, "This way thou mayest understand the thing I speak of." As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up. This history of the serpent was not unknown unto this learned man, albeit he considered not the mystery and sacrament, that it figured. Now Christ teacheth him in this place to understand the law; and because this oration of Christ wrote by St. John is obscure, and lacketh a declaration somewhat of the purpose that Christ would prove, and omits the other part of the comparison, after the manner of the Hebrews, I will annex the type and figure with the effect and mystery of the figure, and make the text plain.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up." Moses was commanded to lift up this serpent in the wilderness for this cause, that whoever was stung or venomed with the poison of the serpents, if he looked upon the serpent of brass, he might be healed. Here is the cause and the effect declared, why the serpent was lifted up. Now to the words of Christ. "It so behoved the Son of man to be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should have everlasting life." Here is Nicodemus taught the way unto everlasting life; and because he was a doctor of Moses' law, Christ by the law made open the matter unto him, and brought him from the shadow unto the true body, and from the letter unto the understanding of the letter: saying, As those that by faith beheld the serpent were healed of the stings of the serpent, so such as behold me in faith hanging upon the cross

shall be healed from that sickness and sin, that the devil by the serpent infected mankind withal.

Now let us repeat the text of Moses again, that we may truly understand our Saviour's words: "Make thee a fiery serpent, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked upon it, he did live." (Numb. xxi. 9.)

In these words are declared three things:

First, why the serpent was set up: the cause, the people were stung by serpents.

Second, the effect, the health of the people.

Third, the use, that they should look upon him.

So John declareth why Christ was made man, the use and the effect of his humanity in these words: "So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The cause of his coming was the sin and sickness of man, bitten by the serpent in paradise. The effect of his coming was the healing of this sickness. The use of his coming was to believe that his death upon the cross was and is sufficient for the remission of sin, and to obtain eternal life.

Here is the justification of man lively expressed, and how many things concur as necessary unto the remission of sin; and yet man only justified by faith:—the word of God, the preacher of the word, Christ himself, the contrition of Nicodemus, the Holy Ghost that moved Nicodemus to come by night unto Christ, the consenting will of Nicodemus unto the words of Christ. Yet only was he delivered from sin by the faith, that he had in the death of Christ: as Christ saith, "So must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This must be diligently marked. For as the fathers of the old

church used the serpent, so must those of our church use the precious body of Christ. They looked upon him only with the eyes of faith, they kissed him not, they cast no water upon him, and so washed their eyes therewithal. They touched him not with their hands, they ate him not corporally, nor really, nor substantially; yet by their belief they obtained health.

So Christ himself teacheth us the use of his precious body: to believe and look upon the merits of his passion suffered upon the cross, and so to use his precious body against the sting of original and actual sin: not to eat his body transformed into the form of bread, or in the bread, with the bread, under the bread, behind the bread, or before the bread, corporally or bodily, substantially or really, invisible; or any such ways, as many men, to the great injury of Christ's body, do teach.

But as the children of Israel only by faith did eat the body spiritually not yet born, so by faith do the Christians eat him now, being ascended into heaven; and none otherwise, as Christ saith unto Nicodemus, "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." Grant that we could as well eat his carnal body as we eat other meat, yet the eating thereof would nothing avail. And if the Apostles had corporally eaten him in his last supper, it had profited nothing; for he took not his body of the Holy Virgin to that use, to be eaten for the remission of sin, or to sanctify him that eats him, but to die for sin, and in that way to sanctify his church. As he saith himself, that only by his death the fruit of his incarnation should be dispersed into the world. But of this I will speak farther in the chapter that followeth.

This example of Nicodemus declareth, that neither the works that go before justification, neither those that follow justification, deserve remission of sin

Though sole faith excludes not other virtues to be present at the conversion of every sinner, yet doth sole faith, and only, exclude the merits of other virtues, and obtaineth solely remission of sin for Christ's sake, herself alone; as Paul saith (Ephes. ii.), "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any one should boast." Where plainly he excludeth the dignity of works, and affirmeth us to be reconciled by faith. So doth John (chap. i.) attribute those two singular gifts unto Christ, grace and verity, saying, "The law came by Moses, and grace and verity by Jesus Christ." Here "Grace" signifieth free remission of sin for the merits of Christ. "Verity" is the true knowledge of God, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost that follow the remission of sin. Therefore such as say they be not justified only by faith in the mercy of God through Christ, extenuate sin and God's ire against sin too much, and likewise spoil Christ of his honour, who is the only sacrifice that taketh away the sin of the world.

They that will justify themselves any other way than by faith, do doubt always whether their sins be forgiven or not; and by reason of this doubt they can never pray unto God aright. For he that doubteth whether God be his friend or not, prayeth not but as an heathen, and saith his *Paternoster* without faith and godly motion of the heart. He that is persuaded by the Gospel, though his own unworthiness fear him from God, yet beholdeth he the Son of God, and believeth that both he and his prayers be accepted in Christ: and thus accepted into grace, he will follow the life of a justified man, as Paul commandeth (Rom. viii. Coloss. iii.), and as all the Scripture giveth example. For it is no profit to say sole faith justifieth, except godliness of life

follow, as Paul saith, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." He that hath obtained the remission of sin must diligently pray for the preservation of God's favour, as David giveth example unto the holy church, saying, "Create a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit." (Psalm li.)

This prayer containeth a wonderful doctrine, and necessary to be daily repeated with great attention and heed. First, he desireth to have a heart pure and neat, judging aright of God, to fear his justice against sin, and to believe steadfastly his promised mercy unto the penitent; and that this light and knowledge be not taken from him by the devil or vanity of the world, as daily we see such as have the knowledge of God's word live more worldly than he that knoweth not what God is. Then he prayeth to have the help of God to govern all his counsels, and all the motions of his heart, that they may be agreeable unto the law of God, full of faith, fear, and charity; that for sin he be no more cast out from the face and favour of God; he prayeth to have strength in adversity, and to rejoice under the cross of affliction; not to murmur or grudge at any trouble, but to obey willingly the pleasure of God; not to leave him or mistrust his mercy for any punishment, but to suffer what God pleaseth, as much as God pleaseth, and when God pleaseth.

These virtues must man practise and use, after he is justified, as well as to obtain remission of his sin, or else he is not justified at all: he is but a speaker of justification, and hath no justice within him. As he maketh Christ only his Saviour, so must he follow such as were of Christ's family; the patriarchs, prophets, and the apostles, in the life prescribed by Christ, as they did, or else they shall be no disciples

of the prophets, who were the doers as well as the speakers of virtue, but rather the disciples of the poets, that only commended virtue and followed it not, as Ovid saith : “ There is a god within us ! we are warmed by his influences : he comes from the ethereal mansions.” These holy words availed nothing.

Such as cannot understand the Epistle of Paul to the Romans concerning justification, and what life is required of him that is justified, let him read diligently the First Epistle of John, and then he shall right well perceive another life to be required of the justified man than the gospellers lead now-a-days, that have words without facts, who slander the Gospel, and promote it not ; as it is to be seen (the more pity !) in such men and such counties, as the truth hath been preached a long time in. For the receiving of it unworthily the Lord will doubtless take from them his word, and leave them unto their own lusts. For this is certain and too true, let the whole Gospel be preached unto the world as it ought to be ; penitence and a virtuous life with faith, as God preached the Gospel unto Adam in Paradise, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, saying, “ Woe to the sinful generation ;” John, the Baptist, “ Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ;” as Christ did, “ Repent and believe the Gospel” (Mark, i.) ; and then of an hundred that come to the Gospel, there would not come one. When they hear sole faith and the mercy of God to justify, and that they may eat all meats at all times with thanksgiving, they embrace that Gospel with all joy and willing heart, And what is he that would not receive this Gospel ? The flesh itself, were there no immortal soul in it, would receive this Gospel, because it promiseth aid, help, and consolation, without works, and when it heareth that it may as well eat a pasty of venison upon the

Friday as a herring, what is he that would not be such a gospeller? But now speak of the other part of the Gospel as Paul teacheth to the Romans (chap. viii.), "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die;" and as he prescribeth the life of a justified man in the same Epistle (xii. xiii. xiv. xv. xvi chap.); Christ (Matt. x.); Peter (2 Peter): he that is justified, let him study those canons to live by

St. Paul writeth to a justified church of the Corinthians, and to such as had received the knowledge of the Gospel, and saith, "If any that is called brother, be a whoremonger or covetous, or a worshipper of idols, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one eat not." (1 Cor. v. This part of the Gospel is not so pleasant as the other; therefore men take the first liberty, and neglect the fruits that should follow the Gospel, and think themselves to be rich in the Gospel, as the church of the Laodiceans judged of themselves (Rev. iii.), when they be indeed miserable, and wretched, poor, and naked of all godliness. Paul declareth (Rom. viii.) what it is to be justified, and to be in Christ, to walk after the spirit; he saith, "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk after the spirit."

For a conclusion, justification is a free remission of sin, and acceptance into the favour of God, for Christ's merits: the which remission of sin must follow necessarily amendment of life, or else we receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. vi. Rom. viii 2 Peter, i.)

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Lord's Supper.

Of this infallible verity, "Only the death of Christ to be the sacrifice for the expiation of sin,"

may be necessarily taught the right and true use of the Lord's Supper, which men call the mass,

First, it is manifest, that it is not a sacrifice for sin, as men teach, contrary unto the word of God, that saith, "Christ, by one sacrifice, made perfect all things" (Heb. vii. viii. ix. x.); and, as John saith, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from sins:" and there remaineth no more after it, as Paul saith, "Where is remission of sins, there is no more sacrifice for sin;" and, to take away all doubt that remission of sin cannot be obtained for the merits of the mass, Paul saith plainly, that without blood-shedding no sacrifice can merit remission of sin.

Although Christ now sitteth at the right hand of God and prayeth for his church, and likewise doth offer the prayers and complaints of us that believe, yet it is only for the merits of his death that we obtain the mercy of God's promise; in the which he sustained such pain, that the remembrance thereof, and the greatness of God's ire against sin, put his precious body and soul into such an agony and fear, that his passion of sorrow surmounted the passion of all men, that ever travailed or were burdened with the weight of God's insufferable ire against man for sin; insomuch that he wept not only tears of blood, but so abundantly pain forced them to descend, that they trickled upon the ground. Sore troubled and overcome with sorrow was David (Psalm vi.) when he washed his bed with tears for sin, but it was joy and mirth, if his pains be compared to these dolours of Christ; they wanted no augmentation. This sacrifice was killed a little and a little; from one place of judgment sent unto another; and always from the flames into the ardent coals. His death upon the cross so differed, that although he was very God, and the dearly beloved Son of the Father, his abjection was so contemptible and vile, that he cried

out as a man most destitute of God's favour and love, and said, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And until such time as he offered his most holy soul unto the Father, and his blessed side was pierced with the spear, his pains and sorrows increased. Lo! thus was the manner to offer Christ for sin! after this sort and cruel handling of Christ was the wrath of God appeased.

If they sacrifice Christ in the mass, let them hang him as tyrants again upon the cross, and thrust a spear into his blessed heart, that they may shed his blood; for without shedding of blood is no remission. The Scripture damneth this abuse of the Lord's Supper, which is the conculcation of his precious blood.

As concerning the use of this sacrament and all other the rites and ceremonies that be godly, they should be so kept and used in the church, as they were delivered unto us of the high Bishop, Christ, the author of all sacraments. For this is true, that he most godlily, most religiously, and most perfectly instituted and celebrated the supper, and none otherwise than the Evangelist doth record. The best manner and most godly way to celebrate this supper is to preach the death of Christ unto the church, and the redemption of man, as Christ did at his supper, and there to have common prayers, as Christ prayed with his disciples; then to repeat the last words of the supper, and with the same to break the bread, and distribute the wine to the whole church: then, giving thanks to God, depart in peace.

Those ceremonies that God instituted not, but repugn God's institution, be not necessary, but rather in any case ought to be left, because they abrogate the institution of Christ. It seemeth sufficient unto me, if the church do as Christ commanded it to do. St. Paul to the Corinthians, after the ascension of

at least eighteen years, wrote his Epistle, and he would deliver them nothing but that he had ved of the Lord, and wrote concerning the use ne Supper, as Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote. his is therefore an ungodly disputation that the sts contend about, the change and alteration of bread, and also a false and pernicious doctrine, teacheth the corporal presence of Christ, both and man, in the bread. For although Christ of the bread, "This is my body," it is well vn that he purposed to institute a sacrament, efore he spoke of a sacrament sacramentally. peak sacramentally is to give the name of the g to the sign; and yet so, notwithstanding, that nature and substance of the sign remaineth, and it turned into the thing that it verifieth. Far- the verity of the Scripture, and the verity of hristian faith, will not suffer to judge and be- Christ's body, invisible or visible, to be upon earth. (Acts, i. Luke, xxiv. Mark, xvi. Acts, iii.) we likewise consider the other places of the ture (John, vi. xvi. xvii.), we shall find that st would not, nor meant not, to institute any oral presence of his body, but a memory of his / slain, resuscitated, ascended into heaven, and thence to come unto judgment. True it is, the body is eaten, and the blood drunken, but corporally. In faith and spirit it is eaten, and hat sacrament the promise of God sealed and firmed in us, the corporal body remaining in ven.

n the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, Christ, ng his church warning of this heresy to come by preaching of false prophets, said, "They will , 'Lo! here is Christ, lo! here is Christ!' be- e them not; for as the lightning cometh from the : into the west, so shall the coming of the Son of

man be ;” meaning by these words, that his body is not a fantastical body nor invisible, as those teachers that say his corporal body is corporally given in the bread, with the bread, and under the bread invisible. Against this error I will set the word of God, and declare the truth thereby, that they have but an imagination or idea of Christ’s body, and not the natural and corporal body.

And the first reason is this: Christ bid his disciples that they should not believe him that should say, “Lo! here is Christ!” or, “There is Christ!” He spake of his body doubtless and human nature: for he commandeth us to believe that his Godhead is every where, as David saith; and as he saith, “My Father and I are one.” Likewise he told them in plain words (Matt. the last chap.), that he would be with them unto the end of the world. Christ having but two natures, one divine, and the other human, by these express words now he declareth himself to be present with the one and absent with the other. These things marked, I put this matter in short to be judged of every humble and charitably spirited man, who judgeth aright of the body of Christ; those that say bodily he is not in the sacrament; or those that say he is bodily and corporally there. If he be there corporally and bodily, as they say, why shall I not believe these words, “Lo, here! lo, there!” and say, Christ lyeth that said, “Believe them not that say, ‘Lo! here is my body,’ or, ‘There is my body?’” Christ having good experience of the devil’s subtlety, that he would intoxicate the wit of man with more subtle reasons than the simple heart could eschew, prepared of his mercy a means to preserve the faith of the simple; and against the sophistical and crafty reason of the devil, God calleth man to the judgment of his senses, and saith, “Reason what they will of my body, and say

it is here or there substantially, bodily, corporally, believe them not. Trust to thine eye; for as the lightning sensibly cometh from the east into the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be." How so? Turned into fire? No, not so visibly and sensibly. God wist right well, when he called man from reason to the judgment of his senses. What doctors and doctrine should follow of his sensible body? one to change a cake into his body, and another to teach, though the cake be not his body, yet is his body present corporally, substantially, really, bodily; the same body that hanged upon the cross, and is given by hand, with the bread, under the bread, and in the bread, and yet insensible.

Grant all their glosses and interpretations to be true, as they be most false; and say, as they would have it, that the very true humanity, and Christ in the true shape and form of a man, as he is with all qualities and quantities, except sin and mortality, to be in the bread, under the bread, or with the bread, after the bread, or before the bread, and say, There is present, in the priest's hand, as great a body, and as natural a man, as the priest or minister is himself, "The word of God made man," so they would have it; yet they shall never deceive a godly Christian with their glosses: for he will trust unto the simplicity of God's word that saith, "Believe them not, till they shew my body unto the senses, like as the lightning."

The defenders of this doctrine, because they be not able to answer unto such as write and preach the truth, they challenge and attribute unto themselves the only knowledge of truth, and say, their adversaries be not learned, nor cannot understand them. Grant there were none learned that defend this truth, as there have been, and ever, till the world's end, shall be, yet will the truth defend itself; and because no

man should, in this matter, leave the truth, though many better learned than he judge fantastically of a true body, Christ would have his simple disciple to judge sensibly of his natural body, and let this sophistication pass, and saith his body shall be as sensible as the lightning in the air, and not invisible with a piece of bread: though that most religious sacrament ought to be most godly used for the mystery that it containeth, and likewise the promise of grace that it confirmeth.

They say this place maketh not against the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament, but against such as should preach, in the latter days, false doctrine against Christ's doctrine, and make another Christ. True, it is, he speaketh of such as should preach false doctrine: but what should be that false doctrine that could be overcome with these words, "Believe them not; for as the lightning cometh from the east unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be." What heresy readeth any man in the histories to be vanquished by these words? Not that of Samosatanus, that was condemned in the council of Nice; not that of Nestor, that denied two natures to be united in Christ; nor that of Eutyches, that said one nature was converted into the other; nor any of the heresies that the devil moved against the essence and divine majesty of God, as Marcion and the Manichees, that said there were two Gods and both eternal, the one good and the other ill, always the one repugnant to the other: neither yet the heresy of Valentinian, that said there were innumerable gods; but of this false doctrine Christ spake, and of such as would, after his corporal ascension into heaven, yet preach in the latter days unto the people, that his body should be in the earth. And therefore he gave them these words, "Believe them not; for as the lightning cometh from the

not to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be."

Christ spake of those that should deceive the people in the time between his ascension and coming in judgment. For in the end of the world there shall be no need to bid us beware, for all false teachers shall be damned when his glorious body shall appear. He that believeth that the natural body of Christ can be here any way corporally before that time, neglecteth the commandment of Christ, "Believe them not" (Matt. xxiv.); and likewise setteth his creed, "He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, thence he shall come, &c." And he saith plainly, that as visibly as he ascended, so shall he descend at the latter day, and not before, as he saith (Acts, iii.). Because they defend their opinion by the wrong interpretation of the words of the articles of our faith, I will answer to one or two objections that they make.

First, they say that this word, "Heaven," in the article of our faith, "he ascended into heaven," signifieth no certain and determinate place, but generally all the world, heaven, earth, and hell, wherever God's power is manifested; and so say, that the right hand of God betokeneth no place, but the whole power of God. As when I say, "He sitteth at the right hand of God," it is as much as to say, that he is in his humanity every where, as his divinity is.

Unto the first this I answer, that Heaven in no place of the Scripture is so taken, though it signify sometimes all the celestial bodies above; heaven ethereal, and then it signifieth the air, as (Psalm cxlviii.): "Ye waters, that be above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord;" and sometimes it signifieth only the upper place of creatures, as in the same Psalm, "Praise him ye heavens of heavens,

praise him in the heights." Into these superior heavens Christ ascended, as the manner of his ascension declareth. (Luke, xxiv. Acts, i.) He took his disciples with him into the mount of Olivet, and bid them there farewell. He departed bodily from them, as their eyes bore them record; and a cloud received his body, that it could no more be seen: yet what became of this body after that it passed the sight? That no question afterward should be, where this body was gone to, St. Luke saith, "He was taken into heaven." This mutation of place, to ascend from the earth, only his human nature suffereth: concerning his Godhead, it is every where, and can neither ascend nor descend.

Such as say that heaven and the right hand of God are in the articles of our faith taken for God's power and might, which is every where, they do wrong to the Scripture, and unto the articles of our faith. They make a confusion of the Scripture, and leave nothing certain. They darken the simple and plain verity thereof with intolerable sophisms. They make heaven hell, and hell heaven, turn upside down and pervert the order of God. If the heaven and God's right hand, whither our Saviour's body is ascended, be every where, and noteth no certain place, as these uncertain men teach; then I will believe no ascension. What needeth it? seeing Christ's body is every where with his Godhead. I will interpret this article of my creed thus: "Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father: the right hand of the Father is every where: therefore Christ ascended to every where." See what erroneous doctrine followeth their imaginations!

As concerning the right hand of God, it is taken sometimes for God himself and his omnipotent power. (Psa. cxviii.) "The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord hath

exalted me." Thus his right hand, being taken for his power, it is every where. But it is not so taken, when we say Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, as Mark saith, chap. xvi. and as Stephen said, Acts, vii. "I see Jesus standing at the right hand of God." But it signifieth a certain place of joy, where the souls of the blessed saints rest. Thither hath God translated the body of Christ to be in as much joy, as it was in contempt here in the earth, as Paul saith (Phil. ii.), sitting thus at the right hand of God, his body is as true man as it was upon the earth, and in length, breadth, and weight, as physical, mathematical, and natural a body, as it was hanging upon the cross.

In the changing of mortal qualities the humanity of Christ is neither destroyed nor changed into his Deity; but as truly as his Godhead, concerning his essence, cannot be seen, so is his body, wheresoever it be, subject unto the judgment of the senses. And as he that maketh a house first conceiveth a true form in his imagination, and yet this imagination or conceit of the mind is not materially the house; so, such as dream and imagine a certain fantasy, and reduce the form and figure of a true body into their imagination, such is not a true body, but a conceit or imagination of a body, as those men have, who say Christ is in the bread and with the bread, yet occupieth it no place, nor is sensible. This is a wonderful doctrine, to make that glorious body of Christ to be a true body, and yet it lacketh all the qualities and quantities of a body. If Christ could have such a dreaming body, as they speak of, yet may I not believe it is in the sacrament corporally, because Christ saith, "Believe it not."

And where they would better the matter with these words, that Christ in the time of his being upon the earth did many things above the nature of a body,

and carried his body sometime invisible, and entered the house of the disciples, the gates being shut; they prove nothing, only they trouble the simple conscience, and stablish such as be more addicted unto the writing of man, than unto the writing of God, in their error. Peter walked upon the water, yet was very man nothing the less: so it pleased God to use his creatures to his glory. Christ's body was nothing changed, although sometimes, for fear of being stoned, he conveyed himself out of the way. Though his disciples knew not how he entered, the doors being shut, it is possible enough, that he opened the doors, and yet they perceived it not: men's eyes be obedient unto the Creator, that they may see one thing, and yet not another. The Scripture so teacheth. Those evil men, that would have done villainy unto the angels in Lot's house (Gen. xix.), were made so blind, they could not find the next door to them; yet abode Lot's house still in one place. The same may ye read (2 Kings, vi.), how God made blind the Assyrian host, so that Elisha led the whole army into the city of Samaria. Balaam saw to beat his ass, and yet could not see the angel, that the ass saw, till he was reprehended by the angel. (Num. xxii.) Here may ye see that those reasons prove nothing, that Christ's body is in the sacrament, because sometimes he would not be seen of his enemies.

This is our belief, that Christ is very man, and like unto his brothers. (Heb. ii.) Therefore, where-soever his body be, it must have the qualities and quantities of a true man. If his body be corporally in the sacrament, and yet without all properties of a true body, this text is false, "He was found in fashion as a man;" likewise this, "He was like unto his brethren in all things." They grant that only the spirit of man eateth the body of Christ in

the sacrament: then either the spirit of man is turned into a corporal substance, or else the body of Christ loseth his corporal substance, and is become a spirit. For it is not possible for the spirit of man to eat corporeally a corporeal body, no more than he, that studieth the Scripture, and commendeth the contents of the Bible to his memory, eateth corporally the book: but by the help of God's Spirit and his own diligence he eateth the effect, marrow, and doctrine of the Bible. And in case it were corporally and substantially with paper and ink in the bottom of the sea, yet the learned man may comfort himself, and teach the mariners in the ship with the contents thereof, though the corporeal Bible be drowned. So in the sacrament the Christian heart, that is instructed in the law of God, and knoweth the right use of the sacraments by the Holy Ghost, and a firm faith that he hath in the merits of Christ's body and soul, which is ascended corporeally into heaven, may in spirit receive the effect, marrow, sweetness, and commodity of Christ's precious body, though it never descendeth corporeally. Thus do faith and the Scripture compel the church to believe.

When they say, it is in the sacrament, and yet moveth not from the right hand of God, I believe not their saying, but require a proof thereof. Christ hath not so great a body to fill heaven and earth corporeally; he is like unto his brethren; he is perfect God and perfect man. They make him to be there, and yet to occupy no place, then it is no body: for a true body, physical and mathematical, as Christ's body is, cannot be, except it occupy place. They say, I must believe, and say with the Virgin, "Behold the Lord's handmaid," I may not seek to know the means how. Well, let them do as much to me in this matter as was done unto the Virgin Mary, and I am content. She could not comprehend how

Christ was made man in her womb: yet the effect and corporal nativity of Christ ascertained both by reason and senses, that she had borne a true body. It shall suffice me if they make demonstration unto my senses, and warrant my reason, that they have present a corporeal body: how it cometh, and by what means, I leave that unto God. But until such time as they shew me that glorious and perfect man's body of Christ, as it was shewn unto the blessed Virgin, their saying, "Believe, believe," shall not come into my belief; for Christ saith, "Believe it not."

Of Christ's words (Mark, xiii.), "The moment of the last time no man knoweth, neither the Son of God," in as much as he is man, I gather this argument *à majori*. If it be denied to Christ concerning his manhood to know the last day, much more to be every where, or to be in divers places at one time, is denied to his humanity. For it is more impossible and wonderful to be every where, than to know many things. I know the geographer conceiveth and comprehendeth all the world in his head but to be in all places, where his thoughts and spirit are occupied, it is impossible.

Farther, Christ's body hath not lost its corporeal qualities, but wheresoever he is corporeally, there is he with all the qualities of a body, and not without qualities, as these dreamers imagine. I will not judge my Saviour that died for the sin of the world to have a body in heaven sensibly with all qualities to be a true man, and in the sacrament to be without all qualities and quantities of a true body; but I abhor and detest with the Scripture this opinion as an heresy so little differing from Marcion's, that I can scarce put diversity.

As corporeally is the corporeal and substantial body of all England in the head of him that describeth by map or chart the whole realm in Italy or elsewhere

so corporeally is the body of Christ in the heart of the Christian. The conceit, imagination, or form conceived of England is not the body, matter, nor substance itself of England : no more is the spiritual conceit of Christ's body the corporeal body itself. Though Avicene and Averrois would prove such a conclusion, yet the faith of our religion will not suffer a fantastical imagination to be a true substance.

To say that Christ's very natural body is in the earth, and yet invisible, it is to destroy the body and not to honour the body. Aristotle (*5 Metaphysicorum, cap. xxii.*) defines what invisible is : invisible (saith he) is that which has no colour at all. To take this from Christ's body, that it is truly in the sacrament corporeally, and yet invisible, is to say, Christ hath lost all the colour, shape, and form of his humanity. But what should Aristotle do in this our faith ? The Scripture teacheth what we should believe ; he ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead (Acts, i. Mark, xvi. Luke, xxiv.), and hath left us a sacrament of his blessed body, the which we are bound to use religiously and many times, in order to exercise and establish our faith ; and he, being absent corporally, doth communicate by faith in spirit that most precious body and the merits of the same : and would to God people would use it with more reverence and more awe, as the Scripture teacheth, with true amendment of life and firm faith.

I put out a book in September last past, dedicated to my Lord of Winchester, wherein I have declared all my faith concerning this blessed and holy sacrament ; therefore I will pass to the other office of Christ's priesthood.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Christ's Office of sanctifying those that believe in him.

The fourth office of Christ is to consecrate and sanctify those that believe in him. He is not only holy himself, but maketh holy others also; as he saith (John, xvii.), "For their sake I sanctify myself, that they may also be sanctified by the truth."

This sanctification is none other but a true knowledge of God in Christ by the Gospel, that teacheth us how unclean we are by the sin of Adam, and how that we are cleansed by Christ; for whose sake the Father of heaven doth not only remit the sins wrought willingly against the word of God, but also the imperfection and natural concupiscence which remaineth in every man, as long as the nature of man is mortal. How the Father doth sanctify his people the prayer of Christ sheweth (John, xvii.): "Sanctify them by thy truth," sanctify them by thy word, purge their heart, teach them, hallow them, make them apt for thy kingdom. Wherewith? With thy word, which is everlasting verity.

The means to sanctify are the word of God, the Holy Ghost, and faith that receiveth the word of our redemption. So doth Peter say (Acts, xv.), "Our hearts be purified by faith." Here is the cause expressed whereby we accept our sanctification; by faith, saith St. Peter. St. Paul (1 Cor. vi.) sheweth for whose sake, and wherefore we are sanctified. "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified through the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." We are sanctified, for the merits of Jesus Christ, by the operation of the Holy Ghost.

This is to be always marked, that when Christ had prayed his Father to sanctify his church by his

word and by his holy Spirit, and desired him to preserve them from ill for his mercy's sake, he added the price, the merits, and just deserving of God's grace, and aid; "I sanctify myself for them, to the end that they may be sanctified by the truth." He sanctified himself for the church, when he died for the detestable uncleanness and filthiness thereof, more stinking and filthy than ever was the abhorred and leprous body of Lazarus. As though he had said, "Forasmuch as I offer and submit myself unto the bitter and cruel pain of the cross for the church, thou most holy Father, sanctify them and accept them as sanctified: nourish them, love them, and defend them for the price and satisfaction of my death."

What a consolation is this for every troubled conscience to understand! Although it be unworthy of remission of sin for the greatness thereof, yet for the prayer of Christ he shall not be a castaway, so that he believe, as Christ said. He prayed not only for his Apostles, but also for as many as should believe his word till the world's end. As many as will be Gospellers, as they love the Gospel and their own salvation, let them not dally and play with it, as if God could be trifled with; but let them think upon the most vile and tyrannous death of Him, that only was able to cleanse us from sin, and from hence beware of sin. It sufficeth, as Paul saith, that "before we knew the truth, we lived wantonly." (1 Cor. vi.)

CHAPTER X.

By this Verity and Truth, that "the Gospel teacheth us only to be sanctified in the Blood of Christ," is confuted the blasphemous Pride of the Bishop of Rome.

The Bishop of Rome nameth himself, "the most holy father," and taketh upon him to sanctify all

other men of the earth, as God's vicar and lieutenant, to absolve *à poena* & *à culpa*, to pull out of hell and send to heaven with his pardons, masses, and other abominations: whereas Christ only and solely doth sanctify, as it appeareth in John, xvii. Likewise by the title that Pilate gave him, hanging upon the cross, with these words, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." This title declareth him to be both Messiah, Saviour, and *Nozer*, the protector and sanctifier of his church, as Matt. saith (chap. ii.), "He shall be called a Nazarene."

This office of Christ doth abrogate all other things that man's constitutions attribute any holiness unto, as bewitched water, candles, vows, or any such ethnic superstition. For only Christ sanctifieth, and all holiness we must attribute unto him, as John said (chap. i.), "Behold the Lamb of God, destined and appointed by God to take away the sin of the world," and to sanctify his church.

Although baptism be a sacrament to be received and honourably used of all men, yet it sanctifieth no man. And such, as attribute the remission of sins unto the external sign, do offend. John (Matt. iii.) preached penitence in the desert and remission of sin in Christ. Such as confessed their faults he marked: and declared them to be of Christ's church. So that external baptism was but an inauguration or external consecration of those, that first believed and were cleansed of their sin, as he declareth himself in the same place: "I (saith he) baptize with water;" as though he said, "My baptism maketh no man the better, inwardly it changeth no man: but I call and preach to the outward ear, I exhort unto repentance. And such as say they do repent, and would change their old sinful life, I wash with water. He that inwardly cleanseth is stronger than I. His grace it is

only that purifieth the soul. I baptize into repentance, that is to say, into a new life."

This new life cometh not, until such time as Christ be known and received. Now to put on Christ, is to live a new life. Such, as be baptized, must remember that repentance and faith precede this external sign, and in Christ the purgation was inwardly obtained, before the external sign was given. So that there are two kinds of baptism, and both necessary. The one interior, which is the cleansing of the heart, the drawing of the Father, the operation of the Holy Ghost: and this baptism is in man, when he believeth and trusteth that Christ is the only actor of his salvation.

Thus be the infants examined concerning repentance and faith, before they be baptized with water; at the contemplation of the which faith God purgeth the soul. Then is the exterior sign and deed not to purge the heart, but to confirm, manifest, and open unto the world, that this child is God's.

And likewise, baptism with the repetition of the words is a very sacrament and sign, that the baptized creature should die from sin all his life, as Paul writeth (Rom. vi.). Likewise no man should condemn nor neglect this exterior sign, for the commandment's sake; though it have no power to purge from sin, yet it confirmeth the purgation of sin, and the act of itself pleaseth God, because the receivers thereof obey the will of his commandment.

Like as the King's Majesty, that now is, immediately after the death of his father, was the true and legitimate King of England, right heir unto the crown, and received his coronation, not to make himself thereby King, but to manifest that the kingdom appertained unto him before. He took the crown to confirm his right and title. Had all England said nay, and by force, contrary unto God's laws

and man's laws with an exterior ceremony and pomp, crowned any other man, he should have been an adulterous and wrong King, with all his solemnities and coronation. Though this ceremony confirm and manifest a King in his kingdom, yet it maketh not a King, but the laws of God and of the land that give by succession the right of the kingdom to the old King's first heir male in England and other realms. And the babe in the cradle hath as good a right and claim, and is as true a King in his cradle uncrowned, as his father was, though he reigned a crowned King forty years. And this right of the babe should be defended and manifested, not only by the ceremony of coronation, but with all obedience and true subjection.

So it is in the church of Christ: man is made the brother of Christ, and heir of eternal life by God's only mercy received by faith, before he receive any ceremony to confirm and manifest openly his right and title. He saith, he believeth in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and believeth (he saith) the remission of sin; he doth not only deny the devil, the world, and sin, but saith, he will forsake him for ever, and serve his Master, the Lord of virtue, King of heaven and earth. Thus assured of God, and cleansed from sin in Christ, he hath the livery of God given unto him, *baptism*, the which no Christian should neglect; and yet not attribute his sanctification unto the external sign. As the King's Majesty may not attribute his right unto the crown, but unto God and unto his Father, who hath not only given him grace to be born into the world, but also to govern as a King in the world; whose right and title the crown confirmeth and sheweth the same unto all the world. Whereas this right by God and natural succession precedeth the coronation, the ceremony availeth nothing. . . A traitor may receive the crown, and yet be true King nothing the more. So

an hypocrite and infidel may receive the external sign of baptism, and yet be no Christian man any the more, as Simon Magus and others.

Sacraments must be used holily, and yet not to have the office of Christ added unto them. Solely it is his office to sanctify and purge from sin. I take nothing from the sacraments, but honour them and extol them in all things, as they be worthy; howbeit not too much. I call a sacrament, a ceremony instituted in the law of God to this end, that it should be a testimony of God's promise unto all such as believe; and a sign of God's good will and favour towards us. As Paul saith, that Abraham received a testimony, by the which God testified that he was received into grace. (Rom. iv.) And as the promise of God, the remission of sin, is received by faith, so must these sacraments that be signs, tokens, and testimonies of the promise, be received in faith. Thus by Christ we are sanctified only, and as Peter saith, "The chosen people, a princely priesthood, a holy people, and peculiar nation, to declare the power of Him that hath called us from the darkness of error and sin into his wonderful light." These words declare the manner how we are sanctified, and what our office is after we are sanctified: to preach the power of Him that hath called us from the darkness of sin: as it is written (Isa. xliii.), "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise:" and likewise in chap. lxi. The Prophets and Apostles do use many times this word, "*annunciare*," for "*laudare*," and "*gratias agere*." So doth Paul (1 Cor. xi.), *Mortem Domini annuntiabitis, donec veniat*; "ye shall shew the death of the Lord until he come:" i. e. ye shall celebrate the death of Christ with all praises and giving of thanks.

Such as be sanctified by Christ must live an honest and holy life, or else their sanctification availeth not.

As God forsook the children of Israel for sin, so will he do us. They were elected to be his people with this condition, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." (Exod. xix.) He that favoured not the Israelites, but took cruel vengeance upon them, because they walked not in their vocation, will do and doth daily the same unto us. (Rom. xi.) Therefore one of these two we must needs do, that say we be justified and sanctified in Christ: either from the bottom of our hearts amend, or else be eternally lost with all our ghostly knowledge. For the axe is put to the root of the tree. So far has the malice of man proceeded, that the ire of God can be no longer deferred. A great time hath the Gospel been known of many men, yet the life of the Gospel as new to seek, as though it were but now begun.

Therefore we see how God beginneth again to permit the darkness of error to overwhelm the world. Such blindness ever followeth the contempt of God's word and the unthankful receiving thereof. Therefore as we be sanctified by Christ, so let us bear him and sanctify him in our breasts, or else we perish. (Rom. vi.) For faith intendeth and always maketh haste unto this port, as Paul saith (Tit. ii.), "that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly."

Men know not what the Gospel is. They read it, as they read "Sir Bevis of Southampton," or "The Jests of Robin Hood." If they may know what the Scripture saith, they judge it sufficient: whereas it is clean contrary. Men should not only read the Scripture to be wiser, but to be better. We bear the name of Christ, and confess him. We must therefore be those persons in whose life the stamps of Christ must appear, or else we blaspheme our Master, whose name we bear. (Rom. vi. 13.) Be-

cause after baptism we should live a modest and temperate life, Christ departed into the desert, and fasted, making this answer unto the dévil; “Man liveth not by bread alone.” Man is not created to the fond pleasures of the world, but to regard what the will of God requireth.

They deceive themselves that trust to faith, where honesty of life followeth not. Faith is mistress in the soul of the Christian, and entertaineth no such servants as be adulterers, thieves, slanderers, drunkards, covetous persons, swearers, ill and unoccupied raveners of the meat of the poor: but charity, peace, temperance, prayer, liberality, and avoiding all occasion of ill. (2 Pet. i. James, ii. 1 Cor. xii.)

CHAPTER XI.

Of Christ as a King.

As the Scripture teacheth Christ to be the very true priest and bishop of the church, who prayeth for the church, satisfieth the ire of God for the sins of the church, and who only sanctifieth the church: so doth it prove Christ to be the King, Emperour, and Protector of the church, and that by the office and property of a King that defendeth his subjects, not only by his godly laws, but also by force and civil resistance, as the enemies of his commonwealth shall minister occasion. By these two means every commonwealth is preserved, as the Scripture teacheth every where.

Pharaoh, that would the church of God and commonwealth of the Israelites to be destroyed, was lost with all his army in the sea. The idolaters, that would make the commonwealth of Christ's church one with the commonwealth of Egypt, were destroyed.

Such as rebelled, as Korah and the Reubenites,

against the governors of God's church, Moses and Aaron, were destroyed with the artillery of God's ire.

All the princes and nations, that possessed the land of Canaan, God destroyed, to set his commonwealth in due order.

In the latter days, when the King of this commonwealth should be born, the angel declared unto the blessed Virgin of what puissance and power this kingdom of Christ should be; "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke, i.) Although now the commonwealth of the church hath no certain place appointed where it shall remain, as it was appointed in the old law; yet certain we be, that this kingdom of Christ remaineth upon the earth, and shall do, till the earth be burned. (Matt. xvii. 28. 1 Cor. xv.) Howbeit, as Christ won and obtained this kingdom in the latter days without shield or spear, so doth he preserve it with his holy Spirit, and not with carnal weapons. As Christ said unto Pilate (John, xviii.); "My kingdom is not of this world:" meaning, that he would not reign in this world, as a prince of this world with pomp and pride; but defend his people with his holy Spirit, that neither the devil nor the world should break their patience, though many afflictions and sorrows should fight against them for the truth's sake. Christ did not deny himself to be the King of the world before Pilate, but asserted, that he meant not to reign in a worldly manner to the hindrance and defacing of the Emperor's dignity and title, as the Jews falsely accused him. So Cyril (lib. xii. cap. x.) on John saith: and so is the mind of St. Austin in the same place.

This kingdom is spiritual. Christ sitting at the right hand of God the Father prayeth for us, giveth us remission of sin, and the Holy Ghost, to fight and overcome the world. He hath left here in the

Church his Gospel as the only weapon to fight withal for the time of this mortal life. See John, xvii. where he defineth life everlasting to be the knowledge of God. So doth Paul (Rom. viii.) prove this kingdom to be spiritual; but that concerning the body it appeareth, that Christ defendeth not his people, because they live in such contempt and adversity, but hereafter it shall appear, as Paul saith (Col. iii.); and John (1 John, iii.), "Now we are sons, but it doth not yet appear, what we shall be."

This kingdom shall be ever persecuted till the world's end. (Psalm. ii. lxxi. cxv.) Isaiah the prophet described the church of this present life, saying, "The Lord shall give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction; yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner." (Is. xxx.) Thus the church shall remain, but always in affliction. I know such as favour not the truth, will interpret my words, that I condemn all princes and kings, as enemies of the Gospel, because they peaceably enjoy their kingdoms. So I wish them always to do, with hearty prayer to the glory of God. But of this one thing I will assure every prince of the world: the more sincere he is in the cause of God, the more shall be his cross.

I report me unto the King's Majesty, that dead is, which at the first brunt, as soon as he took God's cause in hand, that leopard and dragon of Rome did not only solicit the whole foreign world against him; but also he suffered such an ungodly and detestable insurrection of his Popish subjects, and such other crosses also, that never would have been moved, had he not disquieted the beast of her rest, that sat above His Majesty, and above God also, in his own realm.

They be flatterers of princes that say every thing may be ruled with ease: they consider not what

enemy of God's order the devil is, that would not only the Gospel of truth to be oppressed, but also every prince that studieth the preferment and setting forth of God's word. The devil never ceaseth to molest and disquiet every godly politic commonwealth. Were there no Scripture divine to detect the art of the devil, Aristotle in the fifth book of his Politics were sufficient to manifest the devil's enmity against all commonwealths.

Farther, the nature of man is infirm, and far unable to sustain the office of any vocation, be it political, ecclesiastical, or domestic, without a singular aid of God. We see by Saul that noble man, who, in the beginning of his reign, did many noble acts, yet the devil got the victory in the end. His successor David was likewise so entangled in the devices of the devil, that with much pain he could extricate himself from the wicked snare, that the devil once brought him into. Howbeit, God defended both him and his kingdom, so that not only the preachers, but also he himself, taught the word of God unto the people, as he had promised. (Psalm vi. 1.)

God preserveth above human reason his ministers as he did Jacob from the hands of Esau, David from Saul, Daniel from the lions, and Paul in the ship where no human hope of salvation was at all, but on the protection of God. These examples declare that he doth defend his people against all the world by his mighty power.

Likewise he governeth this church with his laws only, and would his subjects to know him, honour him, and to obey him, as he hath commanded in his law. Paul expresseth this law (Rom. i.), "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." And Mark, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark, xvi.) The only whereunto this congregation is bound, is the Ge

as Christ saith (John, xiv.), "The Holy Spirit shall teach you all things, which I have said unto you." Here Christ bindeth the Apostles and all the church unto the things that he had taught them.

This commonwealth of the true church is known by these two marks; the pure preaching of the Gospel, and the right use of the sacraments. Thus proveth Paul (Eph. ii.) that the church is bound unto the word of God: "Upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets are ye built." Likewise (Isa. lix.), "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed for ever."

Of the right use of sacraments it is taught 1 Cor. xi. Mark, xvi. Luke, xxiv. and Matt. xxviii. which teach people to know the church by these signs. The traditions of men and the succession of bishops teach wrong. Those two false opinions have given unto the succession of bishops power to interpret the Scripture, and power to make such laws in the church at it pleased them. There is no man that hath power to interpret the Scripture. God, for the preservation of his church, doth give unto certain persons the gift and knowledge to open the Scripture: but that gift is not a power bound to any order, or succession of bishops, or title of dignity. The princes of the earth do give always such power of civil justice by succession; as one is chief justice for the time of his office to do every thing appertaining unto the same; so hath always his successor the like.

God hath given the civil magistrates power and authority to make such laws for the commonwealth, as shall be agreeable with reason and not against God's law, and likewise power to interpret the same laws. But this is not to be admitted in the church, unto whom God hath given the Gospel, and inter-

preted the same by his only Son, who taught the meaning and contents thereof himself.

To know God and his ire against sin, the greatness of sin, the justice given in Christ, the fear of God, the faith in his promises, the persecution of his members, the aid and help of God in adversity the resurrection of the dead ; where and what the true church is ; the doctrine of everlasting life, of the two natures in Christ, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost : these be the contents of the law whereunto God hath bound his church ; and he hath commanded her to hear his Son concerning the interpretation of these points. And at the commandment of Christ the Apostles were sent to preach these verities in the Spirit of God. It is therefore necessary to retain in the church the doctrine given unto us by the Apostles, and to be the disciples of their doctrine, and not to feign interpretation of our own heads contrary unto their doctrine.

Such, as will be the members of this church, must be disciples of the Gospel, and learn, in fear and humbleness of spirit, the articles of our religion, as they be taught there, and not stand unto the judgment of any man, whatsoever he be, though he say truth. For his truth is nothing, except the authority of God's word contain the said truth.

It is a great confirmation of our faith when we see such as were godly persons before us interpret the Scripture, and use the sacraments as we do. And when the heresy of Samosatanius troubled the Christian brethren, that said, this word, "*Verbum*," in John, "In the beginning was the word," did not signify any person or divine substance, they were confirmed by the testimony of Irenæus, who heard Polycarp, John the Evangelist's disciple, interpret "*Verbum*," in the Gospel, for the Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity. Though we be born

to hear the church (i. e. to say), the true and faithful preachers of God's word, as were in this case Polycarp and Irenæus; notwithstanding, our faith is not grounded upon the authority of the church, but in and upon the voice of the Gospel. We pray and invoke the Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, because the Scripture proveth him to be God: "The Word was God;" also, "My Father worketh until now, and I also work;" "Without me ye can do nothing;" likewise, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The adversaries of the truth defend many a false error under the name of the Holy Church; therefore these treasons and secret conspiracies must be taken heed of; and when the church is named, we ought diligently to consider, when the articles they would defend were accepted of the church, by whom, and who was the author of them; and to leave not, till the matter be brought unto the first original and most perfect church of the Apostles. If thou findest by their writings that their church used the thing that the preacher would prove, then accept it, or else not. Be not amazed, though they speak of never so many years, or name never so many doctors. Christ and his Apostles be grandfathers in age to their doctors and masters in learning. Repose thyself only on the church that they have taught thee by the Scripture. Fear neither the ordinary power or succession of bishops, nor of the greater part. For if either the authority of bishops or the greater part should have power to interpret the Scripture, the sentence of the Pharisees should have been preferred before the sentence of Zacharias, Simeon, Elizabeth, or the blessed Virgin.

Consider, that many times the true church is but a small congregation, as Isaiah saith: "Except God had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom." There-

fore is not the interpretation of the Scripture obligated unto an ordinary power, or to the greatest number, as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, and Christ's time testifieth.

Beware of deceit, when thou hearest the name of the church. The verity is then assaulted; for they call the church of the devil, the holy church many times. As Korah and the rest of the people said unto Moses many times, "Why have ye deceived the people of God, and brought them out of Egypt?" They were the church of God nothing the rather, though it was painted with this holy title: but the church of the devil and a congregation of rebellious and seditious persons, as God declared both by word and fact. Moses called not them the church of God, but the church of Korah not the people of God, but rebels and God's enemies, as God declared them to be by his severe revenging of them. So, many times, had the most part been preferred, then the truth had been confounded, and Moses and Aaron put to death.

Remember, Christian reader, that the gift of interpretation of the Scripture is the light of the Holy Ghost given unto the humble and penitent person that seeketh it only to honour God with, and not unto that person that claims it by title of place, because he is a bishop, or followed by succession Peter or Paul. Examine their laws by the Scripture, and then shalt thou perceive, that they be the enemies of Christ's church and the very church of Korah. Remember, therefore, to examine all kind of doctrine by the word of God. For even such as preach it aright have their infirmities and ignorance. They may depart from the truth, or else build some superstition and false doctrine upon the Gospel of Christ. Superstition is to be avoided, and false doctrine to be abhorred.

whosoever be the author thereof, prince, magistrate, or bishop: and the Apostles made answer (Acts, v.), "We must obey God, rather than men."

The superior powers have authority and may make what laws they list for the wealth and preservation of their subjects, so they repugn not the law of nature, nor the law of God. But, as touching the church of Christ which governeth the soul of man, only the law of God must be obeyed; the ceremonies ordained for good order to be observed in the church should not be neglected, as the assemblies of people on the Sabbath-day, and other feasts wherein the word of God is preached, and the sacraments rightly administered. But those ceremonies, that partly superstition, partly avarice, partly tyranny, have brought into the church, are to be eschewed; as the saying of private masses, blessing of water, holy bread, bell or candle, with such-like. As for the praying unto dead saints, or to have their images in the church, it is not a mere ceremonial matter, but very plain and manifest idolatry, contrary unto the express word of God, who forbiddeth to make any image. And he that prayeth unto God in the name of any dead saint is an heathen, and knoweth not God. For he followeth his own imagination, and not the word of God, which teacheth and commandeth that we should both know and pray unto him in his Son's name (John, xiv.). The neglecting of this commandment deserveth eternal pains.

Such, as have a knowledge of Christ, from henceforth let them give him his right honour, and leave this idolatry and superstition, considering that with great pain he has won the church out of the hands of the devil, defendeth it with his holy

Spirit, and governeth it with the laws of his only word. And consider, whether these injuries, blasphemies, troubles, unquietness, and destruction of God's people by the law of the bishops be to be permitted, though they cry till they be hoarse again, "The holy church, the holy church?" Were the like trouble in any realm among the king's subjects by the occasion and abuse of the king's majesty's laws, doubtless could they not shew under the king's seal their law to be of authority. They should, as right is, soon be put to silence, and their adulterous laws and sophistical glosses removed out of the way. This I know, that Christ knew best all the histories of the old law, was the present teacher himself of all verity, and most wise to provide for the church such laws as should preserve it in his absence.

Now that we know what Christ and his office is in the church of God, it is likewise necessary for every man that is a member of this church to know what man is, and his office towards Christ. For as God hath bound himself by his promise to be our God and helper for Christ: so hath he bound man by his commandment to be his servant, and in his word to follow Christ, and in Christ God, for the commandment's sake, until such time as the end, wherefore man was made, be obtained: which is eternal felicity, and man restored and made like unto the image of God, as he was at the beginning; full of justice, obedience, and love towards his Creator and Maker.

I will not, studying brevity and to be short, write particularly of every member and the office thereof, wherewith all the whole mass and substance of man is framed. That I refer unto the learned physicians that write diligently of the parts of man, and unto Lactantius, *De Opificio Dei*.

Neither what man was at the beginning, before he sinned; full of godly knowledge, always lauding the goodness of his Creator, always obedient unto his will, always following the order of reason, without any ill and contrary concupiscence or other carnal resistance. To be short, man's nature had been in all things like unto the law and as perfect as the law of the decalogue, or ten commandments, had not he sinned: but what man is now after his transgression, thus the Christian reader shall be advertised.

CHAPTER XII.

Of what Man is.

Man, fallen from his first dignity and original perfection, is now the creature that fighteth with the law of God; is full of darkness, ignorance, and the contempt of God; without obedience, fear, and love of God; oppressed and subject unto all calamities and wilful concupiscence, both of body and soul.

Man is the enemy of God (Rom. viii.), the image of the devil, the library of lies, the friend of the devil, right heir of eternal death, and the child of damnation. (Eph. ii.) We are murderers by the means of sin, not only of ourselves, but also of the Son of God, that never sinned. And yet, not understanding this our woful case and condition, we neglect both God and his law, and feel not our infirmities and sickness: the more is our health to be despaired of.

He that laboureth with a dangerous disease, and yet feeleth not the grief thereof, shall never find remedy, neither have the ill removed. We see this to be true by natural reason. Of all diseases frenzy is the most dangerous, yet the patient

feebleth it not, nor can shew where nor how this woful and miserable disease molesteth him. Therefore very seldom or never be such persons cured and made whole. Seeing the next way unto health is the knowledge of the disease, and man is in himself sick and infected with more diseases a thousand fold than I have rehearsed, it is not without cause that I say, that to know what man is, is very necessary, although it seem not so unto such as be drunk with the pleasures of the world, and never think from the bottom of their heart to return unto repentance. If the Scripture of God and writings of learned men cannot persuade them what the ire of God is against sin, my labours shall little avail, I know well. Yet is every disciple of Christ bound to search the glory of God and salvation of his neighbour, and commit the success unto God.

It is very difficult and hard for man to know himself. The only way thereunto is to examine and open himself before God by the light of the Scripture. And he, that will behold himself well in that mirror and glass, shall find such a deformity and disgraced physiognomy, that he will abhor his own proportion so horribly disfigured. Let man seek no farther than the first commandment (Exod. xx. Deut. vi.), "Thou shalt love thy Lord God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy power, and thy neighbour as thyself." Then shall man perceive his wretchedness; how that he loveth nothing less many times than God or his neighbour; and perceive that he is the friend of the devil and of the world, and a contemner of God's ways.

St. James teacheth man to know himself: "Whoso looketh in the law of liberty, &c." St. James useth this word, "law," in the Hebrew phrase, *thorah*, which signifieth a doctrine that teacheth, instruct-

eth, and leadeth a man as well unto the knowledge of himself as of God.

So St. Paul disputes by enallages and prosopopœias in the 7th of Romans. "By the law cometh the knowledge of sin;" he calleth the law the power and force of sin (1 Cor. xv.). Only the law declareth how great an ill sin is, and the man, that beholdeth the will of God in the law, shall find himself and all his life guilty of eternal death. Read the 7th chapter to the Romans with judgment, and then know what man is, how miserably spoiled of virtue and oppressed with sin. So Paul learned to know himself, and knew not what sin was, till the law had made him afraid, and shewed him that he was, with all his holiness, being a Pharisee, condemned. "Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." (Rom. vii.) And in the same chapter he sheweth plainly what he saw in the glass and contemplation of the law, that sin was manifested thereby, and the greatness thereof known. "But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Mark the tralice and play between the law of God and the conscience of Paul, and see how he giveth thanks unto his master the law, and proclaimeth it to be a spiritual and holy thing, as a light or torch to shew man his filthy and stinking nature; saying, "The law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin;" a bondman of sin and traitor to God.

Here thou seest, good reader, what a miserable wretch man is; and how man may know his misery by the law. Howbeit, though we read it many times, we be neither the wiser, nor the better. We be not taught a deal by this mistress the law: she cannot make us good scholars. We

The science of the Scripture is practical and not speculative; it requireth a doer and not a speaker only.

There be many that dissemble faith, and have a certain show of religion, when indeed in the inward man there is no faith at all. Let every man therefore search his own conscience, with what faith he is endued, and remember that Christ said, "It is a strait way and narrow that leadeth to life" (Matt. vii.), and but a few that walk therein." Therefore our only remedy is to pray for grace and amend.

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A GODLY CONFESSION, &c.

DEDICATION.

to the most virtuous and mighty Prince Edward
 our most redoubted Sovereign Lord, King
 of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the
 Faith in earth, next and immediately under God,
 Supreme head of the churches of England and
 Ireland: and also to the most wise, godly, and ho-
 nourable Lords of his Highness's Privy Council,
 to the rest of the most wise, godly, and learned
 Clergy of all the Honourables and others ap-
 pointed to be of His Majesty's most high and godly
 Council of Parliament; I, John Hooper, his most
 loving, and obedient subject, wish all grace
 and favour from God, with long, godly, and most
 prosperous reign over us in all godly knowledge,
 health, and perpetual felicity.

As the wise man Cicero (most gracious and mighty
 saith, that he doth not only wrong, that by
 he oppresseth wrongfully another man; but
 that defendeth not (if it lie in his power) the
 oppressed, and is no less faulty than though he
 forsaken parents, friends, or country. The same
 he practised he in defence and propulsing the
 wrongs and wrongs attempted wrongfully against
 the friends of Clodius, as it appeareth by
 his fluent and facundious oration made for that
 occasion in the senate of Rome. The same kind of
 other godly men in the Scriptures of God
 ways, according to the law, eschewed: for it
 is written; "If a man see his neighbour's ass fall
 under his burden, or his ox to go astray, his neigh-
 bour is bound to help them both, the ass from burden,

and the ox from his straying." The same practised Abraham, when he perceived his nephew Lot oppressed with the wars of the infidels, propulsed and revenged the injuries, and set his nephew at large and liberty.

Even so be there two sorts of people, that two sorts of ways do injuries and wrongs unto the soul and conscience of men. The one of them by force or subtilty defraudeth them from the truth and perfection of God's words, as heretical and superstitious ministers. The other, at such time as they should with prayer, diligence, and preaching, defend the people of God from such injuries and wrongs, are negligent or dumb. The which kind of injury doubtless the Lord God Almighty will at length grievously revenge. Therefore against this kind of injury, he spake unto the Prophet Ezekiel: "If I purpose to send a plague upon the people, and thou give them not warning thereof, I will require their blood at thy hand." The same said he unto St. Peter: "Feed my lambs," "feed my sheep." And unto all the Apostles he said, "Make ye all Gentiles my disciples." And St. Paul, fearing to fall in the danger of the second kind of doing wrong, in saving the wrongs of false religion from the church of Christ, said, "Wo be unto me, if I preach not."

Upon the consideration of the premises, seeing all things be written for our doctrine, I have thought it good to write and set forth this confession and protestation of my faith, submitting myself and my faith also most humbly to be judged by your Majesty your most honourable council, with the godly assemblance of your Majesty's most high court of Parliament, according to the word of God: that by this means I may avoid the pain and danger due unto all them that neglect or omit the injuries and wrongs that may happen and chance by sinister report, and

false slander of God's word, to the conscience of any of your Majesty's subjects. For I am credibly informed, that many false and erroneous opinions are entered into their heads of me (God forgive them that have been the occasion thereof). If any way these injuries and dangerous slanders may be holpen, I think this to be the way, to offer most humbly myself and my faith to be known and judged by your Majesty after the word of God. I protest before God and your Majesty, I write not this confession for any apology or defence to contend or strive with any man in any matter, nor for any private affection or displeasure I bear unto any man living, or for any inordinate or partial love unto myself, but for the cause and to the same end before rehearsed.

Likewise for three other great causes that shall follow. The one toucheth God, the other your Majesty, the third your loving subjects. As concerning God, seeing both his Majesty, mine own conscience, and my auditory know, that I have neither in doctrine, neither in manners, taught any other thing than I received of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and the Apostles, it were not only sin, but also the very part of a miscreant, to deny or betray the innocency of that doctrine, or to be ashamed to stand to the defence thereof, seeing all godly men have esteemed more the true word of God, than their own mortal lives.

The second cause that toucheth your Majesty and your most honourable council, is, because upon credit and good opinion, and partly by experience that your Majesty had both of my true faith and godly zeal, you appointed me (among other of your preachers), though most unworthy, to teach your subjects their duty to God and man. What true subject can hear and understand such untrue bruits of those that a King's Majesty shall appoint to preach, and would

not be glad, both for God's sake and his King's, to remove such ungodly bruits if he can, for the peace and quietness of their subjects?

As for the cause that toucheth the people, it is no less worthy than eternal damnation. In case he be worthy of judgment, and in danger of hell fire, that is angry with his brother, and calleth him fool, how much more if he call his brother heretic and a denier of God? If the first be worthy hell fire, much more the last. Therefore lest my brother should die, and then receive condign reward due for a slanderer, what it lieth in me, I do by this protestation of my faith call him to repentance.

And in case any man stand in doubt of mine opinion and meaning in religion, let him not condemn me beforetime, but use the means with me that the ten tribes of Israel used with the tribe of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, that built, at their return to their possessions, an altar upon the borders of Jordan, the which fact was like to have engendered great wars. But it was stayed by the means of consultation and communication had with those that builded it: and, their minds known, the dissension was ended and appeased. Even so I would desire my Christian countrymen to use me (for I have built no altars of idolatry), if they be in doubt of me in any thing, and not to kill by hearsay, neither before they have heard me speak. Thus I pray God, both they and I may search always to live in his fear, to obey our King, and to be profitable and true members of this realm of England. So be it. The 20th day of December, in the year of our Lord God 1550.

THE CONFESSION AND PROTESTATION OF JOHN
HOOPER'S FAITH.

I. I believe, according to the holy Scripture, to be things without time and before time; also to be things with time and made in time. The thing without time and before time is God only and solely: three in diversity of persons, and one in essence and equality of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: not three Gods, but one God. Things with time and in time be all things that ever were, now are, or ever shall be created in heaven or in earth, until the day of the last general judgment, when both body and soul shall begin together (for the soul ever liveth) immortality and joys without time, of such as be ordained of God to eternal salvation: and of such as be appointed, and have deserved it, to eternal damnation, to begin eternal pains, and so to endure without time.

II. I believe the spirits, both good and bad, and likewise the souls of men and women created by God, to be immortal, and from their creation to live for ever, and never to die. I believe all things created by God, as concerning their creation, to be perfect and good: without hatred, displeasure, grudge, contumacy, rebellion, disobedience, or pride, against their Maker.

III. I believe, that of things created by God, part of them, by grace of God's favour, hath and ever shall persevere and continue in the perfection and excellence of their creation; as the spirits or angels that never fell, nor hereafter shall fall, through the means of Christ.

I believe, that part of those creatures, which God made in their perfection, now to be subject, part of them to immortal pains, part to mortal pains, part unto both: as the devil and man, that fell into this

ruin and p rdition of themselves, although diverse ways : the devil, by pride and arrogancy, whilst he would be like unto God ; man, by ignorance and blindness, by craft of the devil deceived, and not by any imperfection on God's part in their creation, nor by any force of compulsion, or violence on God's part that compelleth them to evil.

IV. For I believe God to be the Author of life and salvation, and the will of the devil and of man to be the occasion of both their loss.

V. I believe all the people of the world to be either the people of God, or the people of the devil. The people of God be those, that with heart and mind know, worship, honour, praise, and laud God after the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles. The people of the devil be those that think they worship honour, reverence, fear, laud, or praise God, and other ways besides or contrary to the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles.

VI. I believe that the people of God, which be the very true church of God, have a certain doctrine that never was, is, or hereafter shall be, violated by time or any man's authority. This authority only and solely is comprehended in the sacred and holy Bible.

VII. And I believe this doctrine of the Patriarchs and Prophets to be sufficient and absolutely perfect to instruct me and all the holy church in our duties towards God and towards our neighbours. Of God it teacheth, that he is but one, almighty, Maker of all things, merciful, just, and every thing that good is. And seeing we know nothing of God, and can judge nothing of God, as touching our salvation but after his word ; we must judge of Him, as we be taught therein ; as well of his divine nature, as of the division of the Persons in the divine essence. So that we be compelled by the authority of God's word to confess the plurality of Persons, the Father, the

Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the unity of one divine Godhead and essence.

VIII. I believe, as touching the Father of heaven, as much as holy Scripture teacheth us to believe, and is set forth in the first of the three Creeds, the Creed commonly called the Apostles' Creed, where we say,

IX. I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and so forth ; with all such things as the Creed of Nice believeth, and after the faith and Creed of Athanasius in this behalf.

X. I believe the second Person in Trinity to be one God with the Father in Godhead, and divers in person. I believe him to be the very substance, image, and figure of God, without beginning or ending, with all other properties and conditions, that the holy Scripture of God or the decree or doctrine of any of the three former Creeds affirm.

XI. I believe that the mercy of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, pitied and had compassion upon Adam the lost man, and was provoked to ordain the Son of God, second Person in Trinity, to debase and humble himself unto the nature of man, and also to become man, to redeem and save the lost man. For even as he was by eternal malice and craft of the devil brought to confusion, to sin, and so to death both of body and soul, nothing having in himself as touching his first creation that provoked, stirred, enticed, or allured him to evil ; even so, after his fall, was there nothing in him, or ever after could be in his posterity, that might or may allure to provoke him or any of his posterity to the means or help of his or their salvation. But even as he was lost by malice and deceit of the devil ; so is he, and so shall all his posterity be, saved by the mercy and merits of Christ. The devil and Adam's will wrought sin and death : God's mercy and Christ's merits

wrought grace and life. The will of Eve and Adam straying and wandering abroad upon the fruit, an object and matter forbidden of God that they should not eat of, brought them unto death: Jesus Christ, the Seed of the woman, applying both body and soul to the obedience of God, deserved life: as it is in the Scriptures and in the second part of the common Creed,

XII. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; he was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell, and the third day he arose again from death unto life, and ascended into heaven, and there sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. And from thence he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead.

I believe that by this means, and no other, the sins of believers be forgiven without the merits and deservings of Adam's posterity. By Adam sin came into the world, and by sin death; even so, without all merits, respects, and worthiness of Adam, or of any of his posterity, by Jesus Christ came remission of sin and life everlasting. And even as I believe stedfastly, sin and death by this means to be overcome and destroyed, and everlasting life to follow it; so believe I the Son of God to be perfect God and man, according to the Scriptures: and do condemn the heresies of Arius and Marcion, with their accomplices and adherents, that wickedly believed the contrary. And as I confess and believe the means of our salvation to be only Christ, so I condemn the Pelagians and all such others, as believed and taught that they could by their own powers, strength, and will, work their own salvation; which false opinion conculcateth, frustrateth, slandereth, condemneth, and blasphemeth all the deservings of Christ. There-

fore the Pelagian is called worthily, “ the enemy of grace.”

XIII. Farther, I believe that the grace of God, deserved by the passion of Christ, doth not only freely and without all merits of man, begin, teach, and provoke man to believe the promises of God, and so to begin to work the will of God : but I believe also all the works, merits, deservings, doings, and obedience of man towards God, although they be done by the Spirit of God, in the grace of God, yet being thus done, be of no validity, worthiness, or merit before God, except God by mercy and grace account them worthy, for the worthiness and merits of Jesus Christ that died under Pontius Pilate. So that I believe grace to be not only the beginner of all good works, but that all good works done by man in their greatest perfection, have need and want grace to pardon their imperfection.

XIV. I believe in the Holy Ghost, equally God with the Father and the Son, and proceeding from them both : by whose virtue, strength, and operation the catholic church is preserved from all errors and false doctrines, and teacheth the communion of saints in all truth and verity : the which holy Spirit shall never forsake the holy church, which is Christ’s mystical body.

XV. I believe that this holy Spirit worketh the remission of sin, resurrection of the flesh, and everlasting life according to the holy Scripture.

XVI. This is my faith and doctrine concerning the Godhead and diversity of Persons in the Holy Trinity, and also of the two natures in Christ, his Godhead and manhood ; abhorring and detesting the heresies of Samosatanus, Arius, Nestor, Eutyches, who were condemned by godly councils at Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and others. I detest and abhor the Marcionite and Manichee, that feigneth

to be two gods, and both eternal, one good and the other evil, always at debate among themselves. I detest and abhor the monstrous doctrine of the Valentines, and so generally of all those that have denied to be any God, or would have many gods. Also all those I detest, that have erred and maintained their error in any thing concerning the essence of God, or denied the plurality of Persons, as of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

This is the faith of God's Spirit in my conscience, which I have learned in his word, and have faithfully and religiously preached, and taught the same in all my sermons, as I will be judged by mine auditory. Also the same doctrine I have furthered and set forth in all my books and writings; though some calumniators and slanderers would gladly make the poor people believe the contrary. But I do decline and appeal from such uncharitable spirits unto the charitable reader and loving heart of all them that be endued with God's holy Spirit: for they will not constrain nor force letter, syllable, word, or sentence contrary to the mind of the speaker and writer, but will judge and search for judgment in the processes and circumstances of the writer, and content themselves with the writer's mind, rather than to bring their affection and corrupt minds to make their own imaginations and fancies another man's doctrine, as the Arian, Pelagian, Anabaptist, Papist, and others do and have done, bringing corrupt minds to the lesson and reading of Christ's Testament, and would that their false heresies and untrue imaginations should be Christ's doctrine.

Seeing both God's laws and man's laws suffer and give liberty to every man in a cause of religion to be interpreter of his own words, it were contrary to justice to put any man from it. For, if the author may not be interpreter of his own mind, what would

not malice, envy, spite, and disdain gather of words most truly and faithfully meant and written? And seeing charity and the laws of this realm, as it appeareth in an act of Parliament made in the first year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Edward the Sixth, give liberty and license to him that shall be accused for a matter of religion, upon malice, evil will, hatred, disdain, or by made and suborned records, to repel and convict all such false records and their accusers by other faithful and indifferent records.

The which act of Parliament God forbid should be denied to any of the King's Majesty's preachers; for if the testimony of their audiences should not acquit them from despite and calumnation of malicious and uncharitable men, they shall not long preach the truth. For either the Papists will accuse them, because they wish the Pope and all monuments of Papistry to be taken out of the way, or the carnal Gospeller, that cannot abide to hear his faults and carnal life rebuked.

And I think if the King's Majesty and his most honourable council prepare not the sooner a bridle and correction for sin, the true preacher of God hereafter shall be more persecuted for reprehending of sin and ungodly life, than ever yet hitherto he hath been persecuted by the Papists.

Thus I have declared my faith and belief towards God, according to the Scriptures, in the which I trust to continue until death doth end this miserable and wretched life. Now I will declare also the same towards the church of Christ, what I believe of the magistrates and ministers of the word, the people I dwell withal. And of these things I will speak according to the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles. For many times, as well heretofore as in our days, have been superstitious hypocrites and fantastical spirits, that have neglected and condemned the office

of magistrates, judgments, laws, punishments of evil, lawful dominion, rule, lawful wars, and such-like, without which a commonwealth may not endure. They have condemned also the ministry and ministers of Christ's church; and as for Christian love and charitable society, they confound them. They use the ministry of the church so, that it is out of all estimation, supposing themselves to be of such perfection, that they need neither the ministry of the word, neither use of Christ's holy sacraments, baptism and the supper of the Lord. And the other they use with such devilish disorder, that they would by a law make theirs their neighbours, and their neighbours theirs, confounding all property and dominion of goods. Before our time the fury and damnable heresy of Marcion and the Manichees against the magistrates troubled many a year dangerously both Asia and Africa; and not yet 400 years since ago a sort of people, called Flagelliferi, did the same.

And now in our time, to the great trouble and inquietness of many commonwealths in Europe, the Anabaptists have resuscitated and revived the same errors, which is an argument and token of the devil's great indignation against civil policy and order. For he knoweth that where such errors and false doctrines of political orders be planted, two great evils necessarily must needs follow: the one is sedition, that bringeth murders, bloodsheddings, and dissipations of realms; the other is blasphemy against Christ's precious blood. For these sects think they be able to save themselves of and by themselves.

Farther, when the magistrates be cumbered with those dangerous sort of people, the devil knoweth they shall have no leisure at will to take some order by God's word to oppress such false doctrine. But this we be taught out of the Scripture, that even as

man is ordained to the order, change, and alteration of time ; as the order of the year appointeth now to be subject unto summer, now unto winter, now to the spring, and now to the fall ; so hath God ordained and commanded man to be obedient to policies and orders wheresoever he be, so they be not repugnant nor contrary to the word of God. As Joseph in his heart bore abroad wheresoever he went the true knowledge and invocation of God, also of Christ to come, yet outwardly in courts, judgments, contracts, and in possession of goods, he used the law of the Egyptians : even so did Daniel in Babylon.

There is no more to be taken heed of in laws and civil policies, but to see the law repugn not the law of God, and that the lawmakers, and those whom the execution of the law is commended unto, have a special and singular eye unto the effect and the meaning of the law, wherefore it was made a law, The which St. Paul wonderfully exhorteth people to understand, saying of the law and magistrates, " Let them be a fear and terror to the evil doers, and a praise and commendation to the well doers." Neither forceth it, though the form and manner of laws, of judgments, of pains, and punishments be not alike in all places, as the laws of feuderies be not alike in Italy, England, France, Spain, nor Germany, yet should every nation be subject to the laws of his own realm and civil policy : and in this doing, he shall offend God no more than the Englishmen that have longer days in the summer, shorter days in the winter than those that dwell nearer to the south ; or St. Paul, that had longer days at the solstitium and pitch of the sun in Macedon than Christ had at Jerusalem. But even as we be content with our measure and length of day and night, and others be contented with theirs, so must both they and we submit our-

selves, and be contented with the measure and order of our own laws.

I do therefore bewail and lament, that the preachers in the church, and schoolmasters in their schools, and the householder in his household, do know no better what the dignity and honour of a civil policy is, by whom it is ordained, and by whom it is preserved; how dangerous and damnable a thing it is before God and man to trouble and disquiet it by any furor or madness of opinion: as the Marcionites, Manichees, and Anabaptists do. I see and know by experience much trouble and danger to arise among the unlearned and ungodly people by ignorance. For when they see such deformities and confusions rise and chance, as we see many times to happen in kingdoms, courts, judicials, laws, governors that more fancy private profit and singularity than the profit of the whole commonwealth, and indifferency of all men, and all causes indifferently; they suppose verily (for lack of knowledge in God's word) that all orders, policies, kingdoms, and dominions be no other thing than cruel tyranny and oppression of the poor; and also to have their beginning and original either of the devil, or of pride and covetousness of men.

This same evil upon the same occasion of ignorance caused natural wise men much to be troubled and vexed about the considerations of kingdoms, policies, rules, and dominions; because they perceived all kingdoms to be subject unto troubles and alterations; and not only that, but they perceived right well no kingdom to be perpetual, nor for ever. And indeed whoso beholdeth the beginning, the continuance, and end of the empire of Rome, shall see right well their imaginations to be no vain thoughts.

How much of her own blood and of strangers'

blood did Rome shed before she came to the region and rule of all the world? When she was inspired thereunto, and was a fear to all the world, how much blood of her own shed she by civil wars and contentions, the writings that mention of Sylla, Marius, Cinna, Cæsar, Pompeius, Brutus, Antoinius, Augustus, and others, declare. Thus when the Lord God would take from Rome for her sins the dominion of the world, he sent the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Arabs, and Turks, that wasted not only Italy, but also Egypt, Africa, and Asia, and so brought the empire of Rome to nought. As many times as I read and mark this history and other like, it causeth me to look upon many evil Englishmen, as Scipio looked upon the great city of Carthage, while it was burning, saying with a lamentable voice, "The inconstancy of fortune in human things is to be lamented." Which voice sprang upon this occasion, that Carthage being a city of great renown and dominion, was now become a prey unto the fire, and he turned, as wisdom always doth, the consideration of present evils unto others yet flourishing in high and prosperous felicity; and declared, as a man seeing before the ruin and fall of things that stood destined, the fall of Rome to come, that should perish by like plague.

Even so, when I behold the evil, pestiferous, affected minds of Englishmen, and perpend and weigh the fruits of such corrupt minds, contempt, hatred, grudge, and malice against their King, magistrates, laws, orders, and policies; doubtless I cannot other think but these men, as much as is in them, conspire and work the destruction of this realm. For it can no otherwise be, but as contempt of godly laws and sedition among the people and subjects, of what degree soever they be, have wrought the de-

struction of other realms; so must it, and can no otherwise do unto this realm.

But what realm or kingdom soever will avoid these evils, let them provide the word of God to be truly and diligently preached and taught unto the subjects and members thereof. The lack of it is the chief cause of sedition and trouble, as Solomon saith; "Where prophecy wanteth, the people are dissipated." Wherefore I cannot a little wonder at the opinion and doctrine of such as say, a sermon once in a week, in a month, or a quarter of a year, is sufficient for the people. Truly it is injuriously and evil spoken against the glory of God and salvation of the people. But seeing they will not be in the whole as good unto God as before they have been unto the devil, neither so glad to remove false doctrine from the people, and to continue them in the true; whereas they did before occupy the most part of the forenoon, the most part of the afternoon, and a great part of the night, to keep the estimation and continuance of dangerous and vain superstitions: were it much now to occupy one hour in the morning, and another hour towards night, to occupy the people with true and earnest prayer unto God in Christ's blood, and in preaching the true doctrine of Christ, that they might know and continue in the true religion and faithful confidence of Christ Jesu?

Exercise and diligence bring credit unto religion, whether it be true or false. For it never taketh place nor root in the people without diligence, as it is to be perceived by the acts and gestes done in the time of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, the kings of Israel and Judah.

What brought the mass and all other idolatry into estimation, but daily preaching and saying thereof, with such laud and praise as every old wife knew

what a mass was worth ? Fifteen masses in a church daily were not too many for the priests of Baal, and should one sermon every day be too much for a godly Bishop and evangelical preacher ? I wonder how it may be too much opened and declared unto the people ? If any man say, labour is left and men's business lieth undone by that means, surely it is ungodly spoke ; for those that bear the people in hand of such things, know right well that there was neither labour, care, need, necessity, nor any thing else that heretofore could keep them from hearing of mass, though it had been said at four of the clock in the morning.

Therefore, as far as I can see, people were contented to lose more labour and spend more time, then to go to the devil, than now to come to God ; but my faith is, that both master and servant shall find the advantage they gain thereby at the year's end, though they hear morning sermon and morning prayers every day of the week. Now by this means they should learn not only to know God, but also their magistrates, and to put difference between the office and the person that is in office, and between the office and the troubles necessarily annexed unto the office ; which bringeth not only knowledge of office and officer, but also honour and reverence unto them both, as St. Paul, that loved the policy, laws, order, and wisdom of the Romans, yet disliked very much the vice and naughtiness of Nero, unto whom he submitted and willingly brought into servitude both his body and goods, and rebelled not, though Nero was a naughty Emperor, for his office sake, which was the ordinance of God. So did Elias love the state, honour, and dignity of the Kings of Israel, yet fell foul out with the faults of Ahab.

The same doctrine teacheth St. Peter unto all servants, commanding them to obey their masters,

though they be evil, having a respect unto the place they be in, which is the order of God, and not unto the vice and abuse of the person in God's order. Truly, be the ruler of himself never so evil, yet the laws, judgments, punishments, and statutes, made for the punishment of evil, and the defence of the good, be the very work of God ; for the magistrates be the keepers of discipline and peace. Therefore as the motion of the heavens, the fertility of the earth, be the works of God, and preserved by him, even so be the governors and rulers of the earth, as David saith, " He giveth health to princes ;" as it was shewed in himself, Solomon, Jehosaphat, and others.

The regimen and policy of King David was troublous and full of miseries ; the reign of King Solomon his son peaceable and quiet ; the reign of Joshua victorious and prosperous ; the reign of the Judges that followed so troublous and unquiet, as a more rent and torn commonwealth I have not read of : yet was the order of God all one, as well in the one, as in the other, and required as much love, assistance, and obedience of the people to their king and magistrates in their trouble, as in their quietness and peace.

So doth Daniel, the Prophet, most godlily and wisely teach by his image, that he saw of four sundry metals ; but he concludeth, whether the regimen and regent were gold, silver, copper, or iron, the people always obeyed.

The same teacheth also the doctrine and example of John Baptist, Christ, St. Stephen, and St. James, John's brother. For although the regimen were neither so godly nor so quiet in Herod's time and Pontius Pilate's, as it was in Solomon's time, yet gave they always like reverence, honour, and obedience unto them, for their order's sake, as though they had been the virtuousest princes of the world, as their doc-

trine, tribute, and blood recordeth. For they gave unto Cæsar the things due unto Cæsar, as their bodies and their goods, but their souls they owed to none but unto God. And when diversity of religion and doctrine should be discussed and determined by their laws, they declined from their judgment, and appealed unto the word of God, to have all controversies ended thereby. When this took place, they gave thanks to God; when it did not, they were content patiently to bear whatsoever God's hand would permit the magistrate to lay upon them.

Were these examples known and kept before men's eyes, people would not for a fault or two that should happen in the regimen, irritate and provoke the regents and princes with contumacy and rebellion, as is seen commonly at this day; but rather follow the example of the Jews, who when they heard of the facts and doings of Ptolemy, that killed twenty thousand of their countrymen, and caused those that he took captive to eat the flesh of their own dead fathers and brothers, yet rebelled they not, but knew it was for their sin, and therefore exhorted one the other to penance and amendment of life. The same self doctrine teacheth our Saviour Christ in his holy Evangelist Luke.

This I thought good to put in my creed for the clarification of my faith towards civil magistrates, orders, and laws; and to open the difference between orders, the person, and such troubles as be annexed to the order; lest any man should, for trouble and confusion's sake, condemn order and regimen itself, use by the means thereof to detract, and forsake to pains on such vocation as the Epicureans did; and as indeed rule and regimen themselves be the benefits of God; and therefore now in the time, more to be preached and taught unto the people, for divers considerations, than ever heretofore;

specially because contempt of honesty and laws, labours, and godly exercises, reign more than ever they did. For at the beginning men so obeyed reason, and were ruled thereby, that they brought themselves into order and policy; and for the maintenance thereof sought out crafts and arts necessary for the preservation of policy and order, and so were glad rather to be ruled by reason than by force and policy. This time being expired, and reason corrupt aspiring farther than reason by nature should, partly for too much love of self, partly to tame and keep in subjection such as disordered all good order and rule, they descend from the regimen of reason unto the force of war and martial laws; the same seeming good unto Almighty God, to tame and reclaim men by force that would not be ruled by reason.

But now are we fallen into the last time and end of the world, wherein for reason ruleth lust, and for just battle ruleth immoderate concupiscence; for scarce is there one of a hundred that loves to seek for the wisdom and knowledge of reason and of arts that other men found out and left unto us. And as for the pains and travail of war, let every man judge and consider himself whether our weak nature can suffer as much as David, Achilles, Cyrus, Alexander, Hannibal, Marcellus, Scipio, Cæsar, and others did. Then shall we perceive that nature now in man consumed, effeminated, and worn out, is a thing most unable to do what fore-age hath done. Therefore have these latter days more need of much teaching in civil causes than the old age before us, which better and more modestly governed themselves by only reason, than now we do by God's word and reason. And this is not known only by the holy Scriptures, but also by profane writers, that declare with the age of the world iniquity to increase. And our expe-

rience may be a commentary in this behalf to God's laws and man's laws. For St. Paul declareth the civil magistrate not only to be ordained, but also preserved by God, and that all men should accept and account him the true magistrate that God hath appointed, and not such an one as the people and subjects appoint themselves.

And even as wise Cicero, at the beginning of the mortal dissension and debate between Pompeius and Julius Cæsar, gave counsel according to the will of God (declared unto him by the suffrages and voices of the Romans), that Cæsar should have been chief ruler of the people; now, for lack and contempt of knowledge, both St. Paul and Cicero be neglected. For either the people will have no magistrate at all, or else such an one as it pleaseth themselves, and not him that God hath appointed. If this adoration take no place, they will change (if they can) the state of the commonwealth, that where one reigneth a monarch or king, they would change it into the regimen of many. And where many reign (as men never contented with the state that God hath appointed), they turn the regimen of many into the government of few. Whose nature Horace well declareth:

Optat ephippia los : piger optat arare caballus.

Against whose preposterous judgments and fickle minds St. Paul vehemently writeth: "The powers," saith he, "that be, are ordained of God," and not the powers that subjects shall choose and make at their pleasures. For no man, of what degree, state, or authority soever he be, being a private man (as all men be in a monarchy, where one ruleth, in respect of the King that ruleth), should meddle with the state of a realm. For it is God that ordained it, and he that dissolveth it. Neither should this fond

opinion take any place in a Christian man's head, that any offices appointed by God should cause the officers to be evil before God. For the Lord giveth them titles and names of great honour and love; as gods, and such as serve and please him; also the nurses of the church; as the examples of Adam, Enoch, Noah, with others, who were in those days very godly rulers, to maintain virtue, and punish vice. This saw not only the Patriarchs and godly men of the Scripture, but also natural wise men, that saw and reverenced order and policy, as Plato writeth, saying, "As the ox is not ruled by the ox, nor the goat by the goat, but by a more pure nature, that is to say, by man; so the nature of man is more infirm than can rule itself." Therefore God appointed not only man to rule, but also such men as excelled in wit and wisdom, adjoined with the special and singular grace of God: and so saith Plato *De Legibus*, "*Ubi non Deus sed mortalis aliquis dominatur, ibi malorum vel ærumnarum nullum esse effugium.*" Where any mortal man beareth dominion and not God, there can be no escape of calamities and miseries. Of the same opinion is Homer the poet, who saith that the gods appoint their shields to defend princes, as Pallas defended Achilles. That doth Jehosaphat the king in the place afore rehearsed wonderfully declare. And whoever will consider the execution and due pains towards evil doers, shall right well perceive that God himself is in the magistrate. For Christ saith, "He that striketh with sword shall perish with the sword." And of the oppressors it is spoken, "Wo be unto thee that spoilest, for thou shalt be spoiled." So that we see God to defend civil justice upon earth.

Abraham, Jeremy, and St. Paul declare that the civil policy is the ordinance of God; by such prayer they commanded the people to pray for it; and this

prayer for the magistrate declareth what diversity there is between a magistrate christened and a heathen; wherein Cicero differeth from Isaiah, and King David from Julius Cæsar. Cicero gave counsel after reason and experience to rule the commonwealth, but many times it took not good effect for lack of the wisdom of God. Isaiah and the rest of the Prophets gave counsel not of themselves, but from God; and what prince soever obeyed their counsels, he prospered always, and had good success. The same you may see in the fashions and manners of their wars. Alexander thought himself strong enough by natural strength to conquer his enemies. King David added to his sling-stones the prayer and help of God's name. Therefore if heathen magistrates should be obeyed, much more Christian magistrates.

And in case the King's Majesty of England may find no less obedience in his subjects than Scipio, Alexander, and others found among theirs, England shall be too strong with God's help for all the world. But Englishmen, I speak it with sorrow and grief of heart, have learned of Cleon, a man that Aristophanes writeth of, that had one foot in the senate, and another in the field; so have Englishmen one hand at the plough, and the other against the magistrates. The ministers of the church, parsons and vicars, have one hand upon the altar, and the other to strike at the King's crown. They do follow the ape that Harmogenes' fable speaketh of, that would have had other apes to have builded houses, towns, and cities, to have defended themselves from the dominion of their lord and ruler, man; and thought it not meet to live in that state that God had appointed them: even so subjects, now-a-days (God amend it), make themselves defences, cities, castles, towns, tents, pavilions, to defend them against

their king, lord, and magistrate, and will not be content to live in the state that God appointed them unto. But it shall happen unto them as it did unto the apes; their counsel and conspiracy shall never take place.

Let us therefore remember St. Paul, that saith, the powers that be, are of God, and not such as we would make, and let us be contented with them, and obey them for conscience sake: for such as disobey and rebel against superior powers, rebel against God, and so God punisheth it with eternal damnation. This is enough to keep every good man and true subject in obedience to the higher powers. If the reader of the Scripture of God note the first and the second chapter of Genesis, he should perceive rule and policy, or ever man wist what sin meant: for the Lord gave the superiority and dominion to Adam over all beasts. Of whom now we may right well learn obedience, if we were not worse than beasts.

Now a word or two of the magistrates' duty. Aristotle calleth the magistrate *φυλαξ νόμου*, a keeper of the law. Let him use it therefore indifferently without respect of persons, in punishing such as trouble by inordinate means the commonwealth: and also such as blaspheme the living God, as godly kings and rulers have done, David, Josias, Nebuchadnezzar, Constantine, and others. For although a civil law and punishment cannot change the heresies of the mind, neither the desire that men have to do evil; yet when they break forth against the honour of God, and trouble the commonwealth, they should be punished. For the magistrate is as one that hath the two Testaments tied at his neck, and should defend them as his own life: and therefore St. Paul calleth him not only the avenger of evil, but the maintainer of good; and Isaiah the Prophet saith the same,

[VII. Now I will declare my faith concerning external and visible church of Christ, and of the members thereof. I call this visible church, a visible congregation of men and women, that hear the Gospel of Christ, and use his sacraments, as he hath instituted them. In the which congregation the will of God worketh the salvation of all believers, as Paul saith : “ The Gospel is the power of God unto the salvation of the believer.” As though he had said, By the Gospel of Christ, where it is heard and believed, the mind is changed by the virtue of the Holy Ghost, from the love of sin unto the love of God. The will is wrought to consent ; and the consent is so assisted by the Holy Ghost, that faith attaineth the remission of sin, and the beginning of everlasting life. And these two marks, the true hearing of God’s word and right use of the sacraments declare what and where the true church is. Unto the which church I would all Christian men should associate themselves, although there may happen to be some things to be desired in manners and discipline. For no church, as touching this part, can be absolutely perfect. But where the doctrine is sound, and no idolatry defended, that church is of God, as far as mortal men can judge. And where the doctrine and right use of the sacraments be not, there is no church of Christ, though it seem never so holy. For in the blessed Virgin’s time the Pharisees and Bishops were accounted to be the true church ; yet by reason their doctrine was corrupt, the true church rested not in them, but in Simeon, Zachary, Elizabeth, the shepherds, and others. The Lord doth St. Paul teach us, that whosoever he be that preacheth other doctrine than the word of God, is not to be credited, though he were an angel of heaven. Neither will such as know God hearken unto them, but will hear Christ, the Prophets, and Apostles, and no others.

The other mark is the right use of sacraments, whereof were two in number with the fathers in the ministry of the church, and so many yet be with us in the ministry of the church, and have annexed unto them the promise of eternal salvation, and also of eternal damnation, if they be contemned, and may be lawfully had. In the law of Moses was circumcision and the paschal lamb : and in their places we have baptism and the supper of the Lord, diverse in external elements and ceremonies, but one in effect, mystery, and thing itself: saving that their sacraments shewed the graces of God to be given unto men in Christ to come, and ours declare the graces of God to be given in Christ that is already come ; so that the sacraments be not changed, but rather the elements of the sacraments. And every one of these sacraments have their peculiar and proper promises, unto which they hang annexed as a seal unto the writing ; and therefore be called, after St. Paul, the confirmations or seals of God's promises. They have peculiar elements, by the which they signify the heavenly mysteries that sacramentally they contain, and be the thing indeed. They are called sacraments, that is to say, visible signs of invisible grace ; they have their proper ceremonies, and testify unto us the obsignation and confirmation of God's heavenly gifts. They have also their proper commandment, because we should not change, add, nor take from them any thing at our pleasure. Thus in general I think of all God's sacraments in the ministry of the church.

XVIII. And of baptism, because it is a mark of our Christian church, this I judge after the doctrine of St. Paul, that it is a seal and confirmation of justice or of our acceptation into the grace of God. For Christ, his innocency and justice, by faith is ours, and our sins and injustice by his obedience are his,

whereof baptism is the sign, seal, and confirmation. For although freely by the grace of God our sins are forgiven, yet the same is declared by the Gospel received by faith, and sealed by the sacraments, which be the seals of God's promises, as it is to be seen by the faith of faithful Abraham.

Baptism hath its promises, as it is afore said; its element, the water; its proper commandment and its proper ceremonies, washing in the water. As for other men's opinions; that say circumcision was the seal not only of Abraham's acceptation freely into the grace of God by faith, but also of his obedience and proper justice, I believe it not to be true; for St. Paul confuteth it in the same place as an error, saying, "Abraham had nothing whereof he might glory before God." If he had nothing, God confirmed that he gave him, and not that he found in him; for St. Paul saith, that circumcision was the seal of the justice that came by faith, and not by works. They be out of the way that have the like opinion of baptism; for St. Paul disputeth not in that place, whether works please God, but sheweth that our salvation cometh by grace, and not by works.

There be others, that think sacraments to be the confirmations not only of our free acceptation into God's favour by faith, but also of our obedience towards God hereafter. And because infants and young babes cannot profess obedience, nor put off the old man, nor put on the new, they would exempt and defraud the young children of baptism. St. Paul confuteth also this opinion in the same place: "Abraham," saith he, "believed God, and it was accounted unto him for justice;" and saith not, Abraham professed obedience. Therefore God confirmed his own infallible truth and promises to Abraham by circumcision, and not Abraham's obedience.

For if he had, he had confirmed the weak and uncertain infirmity of man, and not his own infallible truth. For Abraham with all his obedience was infirm and imperfect without Christ, yet was bound to work in a godly life. As for those that say circumcision and baptism be like, and yet attribute the remission of original sin to baptism, which was never given unto circumcision, they not only destroy the similitude and equality that should be between them, but also take from Christ remission of sin, and translate it unto the water and element of baptism.

XIX. As for the supper of the Lord, which is the other sacrament whereby the church of Christ is known, I believe it is a remembrance of Christ's death, a seal and confirmation of his precious body given unto death, wherewith we are redeemed. It is a visible word, that preacheth peace between God and man, exhorteth to mutual love and godly life, and teacheth to condemn the world for the hope of the life to come, when Christ shall appear, and come down in the clouds, which now is in heaven, as concerning his humanity, and no where else, nor ever shall be, till the time of the general resurrection.

I believe that this holy sacrament hath its proper promises, proper elements, proper commandment, and proper ceremonies.

XX. As concerning the ministers of the church, I believe that the church is bound to no sort of people, or any ordinary succession of bishops, cardinals, or such-like, but unto the only word of God, and none of them should be believed but when they speak the word of God. Although there be diversity of gifts and knowledge among men, some know more, and some know less : and if he, that knoweth least, teach Christ after the holy Scriptures, he is to be accepted : and he that knoweth most, and teach-

eth Christ contrary, or any other ways than the holy Scriptures teach, is to be refused.

I am sorry therefore will all my heart to see the church of Christ degenerated into a cruel policy; for even as kings of the world naturally by descent from their parents must follow in civil regimen, rule, and law, as by right they ought; even so must such as succeed in the place of bishops and priests that die, possess all gifts and learning of the Holy Ghost, to rule the church of Christ as his godly predecessor had; so that the Holy Ghost must not be captive and bondman to bishops' sees and palaces.

And because the Holy Ghost was in St. Peter at Rome, and in many other godly men that have occupied bishoprics and dioceses, therefore the same gifts, they say, must needs follow in their successors, although indeed they be no more like in zeal nor diligence than Peter to Judas, Balaam to Jeremy, Annas and Caiaphas to John and James. But thus I conclude of the ministers, of what degree or dignity soever they be, they be no better than records and testimonies, ministers and servants of God's word and God's sacraments: the which they should neither add unto, diminish, nor change in any thing. And for their true service and diligence in this part, they should not be only revered of the people, but also honoured by the magistrates, as the servants of God. And I believe that as many souls, as perish by their negligence or contempt of God's word, shall be required at their hands.

XXI. Of the people thus I believe, that they owe their duty and obedience to God, to their king and magistrates, unto their neighbours and to themselves.

Unto God they owe both body and soul, to laud and praise him according to God's book, to call upon him in the days of their trouble, and upon none else,

to confirm both their doctrine and their lives, to promote and set forth the glory of God.

Their duty to the King's Majesty is their obedience to him, his laws, and the realm, for conscience sake, and their readiness rather to lose body and goods, than to offend his Highness or his laws. And whensoever any subjects be called to serve with body or goods at home or from home, willingly they must obey without question, or for the inquisition to search whether the King's cause be right or wrong. For, whether it be or not, maketh the death of him that serveth in this respect neither better nor worse. For I believe, that such as obeyed King Josias, and were slain in the battle against the Egyptians, were acceptable unto God Christ, though King Josias had not the best quarrel. In this case the subject oweth his body and goods unto his lawful magistrate, and may deny him none of them both.

Unto their neighbours they owe good-will and charity, help, and preservation of their bodies, souls, goods, and fame, that none of all those perish, they may preserve them.

They owe unto themselves the study and labour to read and hear the Scripture of God, until such time as they have laid a true foundation of faith in Christ. When that is done, they be bound to themselves to build upon that foundation all charitable works, as well to God, as to man, with innocency of life.

After that, they owe to themselves study and diligence to make defence for their true religion against the devil, the flesh, the world, sin, the wisdom of man, and superstitious hypocrites, which cease not to pervert and destroy in man the image and work of God.

Away ! away ! I pray you, with this opinion, that thinketh a man to owe no more unto himself for religion, than to learn by rote the creed, ten commandments, and Paternoster. St. Paul rebuketh that opinion, as it is to be seen in his Epistles.

We owe unto ourselves due labour in praying unto God daily for the necessities of both body and soul, and likewise to give him thanks for all the goodness that he hath given unto us.

Also we owe unto ourselves, the eschewing and avoiding of idleness and oisivity : also we owe ourselves the labours of our own hands, with the industry and gift of reason, learning, and wit, to eat our own bread with the sweat and pain of our own bodies, according to the commandment of God.

Thus I conclude my faith ; the which, being examined by the word of God, is catholic and godly ; who send us of his grace to fear him, honour the King, and to love one the other, as Christ loveth all. So be it. The 20th of December anno Domini MDL. Lord bless thy church, and save our King.



AN
HOMILY,
TO BE READ IN
THE TIME OF PESTILENCE;
CONTAINING
THE TRUE CAUSES OF THE SAME; AND LIKEWISE A MOST
PRESENT REMEDY FOR AS MANY AS BE ALREADY,
OR HEREAFTER SHALL BE, INFECTED WITH
THAT DISEASE.
GATHERED OUT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,
BY
JOHN HOOPER,
BISHOP OF WORCESTER AND GLOUCESTER.
A. D. 1553.



To all Pastors and Curates within the King's Majesty's Diocese of Worcester and Gloucester.

EVEN as we be blind and unthankful for God's favourable mercies, wherewithal he followeth us in health, wealth, and prosperity ; so we be blind, and unsensible for his most just plagues, wherewithal he punisheth us in sickness, scarcity, and troubles. And now, amongst other tokens of his displeasure and wrath, he hath sent us in divers places one of the extremest plagues that ever he devised to punish man withal in this life, the plague of pestilence.

Forasmuch as he meaneth thereby not only to kill and destroy the bodies of such, as by this plague he purposeth to take out of this mortal life : but also without repentance and turning of his mercy in Christ before death, the souls of such as depart from hence, must needs perish by God's just judgment. And not only this will be the end of such as it pleaseth God to strike to death by this his servant and messenger, the plague of pestilence ; but also the like danger of his displeasure remaineth to me, and to all others that have the cure and charge of the people's souls in this the King's Majesty's most noble realm, over whom God and he hath made us watchmen and overseers, to admonish and warn the people of all dangers and plagues that God shall send for their punishment ; in case we admonish not in time the people committed unto our charge of such plagues as for sin he purposeth to punish us withal : for then their loss and damnation shall be required at our hands.

For the discharge of myself, and also for the better instruction of such as have cures within this diocese of Worcester and Gloucester (and yet not best able to discharge them), and furthermore for the profit and salvation of the people, amongst whom it may

please God to send his fearful plague of pestilence : I have thought it my bounden duty (seeing at all times I cannot comfort the sick myself) to collect or gather into some short sermon or homily a medicine and most pleasant help for all men against the plague of pestilence : and in the same also to provide some present remedy for such as shall be infected with that disease. And for the better understanding of the medicine, I will use this order, that all learned physicians do use in their practice : first, I will shew the chiefest cause of their pestilence ; and then, what remedy is best to be used against it, and to heal it when it hath infected any man.

And although I will speak herein somewhat as other physicians have done ; yet because they have spoken already more than I can in the matter, though it be a great deal less than the matter of the disease requireth (for none of them have shewed any certain remedy, be their reason never so good), I will briefly, as by the way, somewhat speak of this disease, as they do : but as a preacher of God's word, and as a physician for the soul, rather than for the body, treat of the sickness and the remedy thereof, after the advice and counsel of God's word, who supplieth all things omitted and not spoken of, concerning this most dangerous plague, by such as have written, besides the Scripture of God, their mind touching the same. For indeed the chief cause of all plagues and sickness, is sin : which, remaining within all men, worketh destruction, not only of the body, but also of the soul, if remedy be not found.

And whereas Galen saith, that " all pestilence cometh by the corruption of the air, that both beasts and man drawing their breaths in the corrupt air, draw the corruption thereof into themselves," he saith well ; yet not enough. He saith also very naturally, that when the air is altered from its natural

quality and temperature to too much and intemperate heat and moisture, pestilence is like then to reign. For as he saith in the same place, that "heat and moisture distempered be most dangerous for the creatures of the world," yet that is not enough. As Ezekiel saith, where God sendeth all these distemperances, and yet if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the midst of them, they shall be safe. Even so saith David also: "Though they die at the right hand ten thousand fold, and die at the left hand ten thousand fold, the plague shall not touch him that sitteth under the protection of the Highest."

And whereas reason hath many good and probable arguments in this matter touching the cause of pestilence; as that it should come sometimes by reason of such humours as be in the body disposed and apt to corrupt, then is the man quickly (by drawing and breathing as well the corruption of himself, as the infection of the air) infected. And that such humours, as be gross and inclined to corruption, rise of evil and immoderate diet; and that the infection taketh its original and beginning from such beasts, carrions, and other loathsome bodies as rot upon the face of the earth, not buried: or else from morish, standing, and dampish waters, smokes, or other such unwholesome moistures, so that towards the fall of the leaf, both the air that man liveth in, as also man's body itself, be more apt and disposed to putrefaction in that time than in any other for divers natural causes.

These causes are to be considered as natural and consonant to reason: yet there be reasons and causes of pestilence of more weight, and more worthy of deep and advised considerations and advertisements than these be. And the more, because they lie within man, and be marked but by very few, and hide themselves secretly, till they have poisoned the

pestilence : the greatness and danger whereof passeth all human and worldly helps, as it appeareth by his lamentable cry and complaint unto the Lord : " My soul (saith he) is sore troubled : but how long, Lord, wilt thou defer thy help ? " (Psa. vi.) And the same cry and complaint he made unto the Lord when the plague of pestilence had infected his whole realm from Dan to Beersheba (2 Sam. xiv.), and saw the remedy thereof to be only in God ; praying him to command his angel to strike the people no more.

Hezekiah the king saw (Isa. xxxvii.), that, besides God, all medicines and remedies were too weak, and inferior for the strength and power of the pestilence and sickness : wherefore he turned himself to the wall, and prayed God to do that for him, that no physic nor medicine was able to do.

And St. Paul in his wonderful oration (1 Cor. xv.) that he maketh concerning the resurrection of the dead, weigheth most deeply the nature and condition of man's estate in this life ; burdening him with such strong adversaries, sickness and diseases, both of body and soul, that every man may see, how impossible it is for man to find deliverance from the tyranny and strength of sickness, except only by the mercy of God in Christ Jesus : numbering there six adversaries so strong, as the least of them (except Christ help) is able to destroy both body and soul.

The first is corruption : the second, mortality : the third, sin : the fourth, the law, condemning sin : the fifth, death : the sixth, hell : necessary and unavoidable plagues and sickness of man in this life. Against the which he findeth no remedy, neither by Galen nor Hippocrates, neither yet by the earth of *Para* (*Plin. lib. xxiv.*), that men say cureth all wounds. But with great faith and confidence marketh and weigheth the strength of diseases (though they be never so strong), to be yet inferior to the medicine

and remedy, that God hath provided for us only in Christ. Therefore he compareth the inferior strength of all those sicknesses, unto the sufficient remedy of God through Christ, saying after this manner: "Thanks be unto God, which hath given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Whereby it is evident and plain that God is the only remedy for all plagues and diseases. Howbeit, now I shall more specially open the causes of the plague, and the nature of the same: that our sickness and the causes thereof may be more known, and the better avoided.

The principal cause of pestilence is opened by St. Paul in these words: "By sin (saith he) came death into the world:" and for the cause of sin, God sendeth the plague of pestilence and of all other diseases that punish towards death. As King David saith, "Thou dost punish the children of men for sin." Moses also plainly sheweth, that the principal and chief cause of pestilence is not in the corruption of the air, nor in the superfluous humours within man: but that sin and the transgression of God's law is the very cause and chief occasion of pestilence and of all other diseases. And the experience thereof was tried in the pestilence that reigned in King David's time for his sins, and the sins of the people. So that all the Scripture of God manifestly declareth that the contempt and breach of God's laws, is the chief and principal cause of pestilence, and of all other plagues that he sendeth for our punishment. And from this cause proceedeth the corruption of the air, which is never corrupted, nor can corrupt man or beast, except man (for whose sake and comfort both air and all the other creatures were made) be first corrupted by sin and transgression of God's laws. Neither could man take any surfeit by meats, nor any evil humours could be engendered of any meats, were not the man that useth them corrupt

and first infected with sin. But when the Lord doth see that the people forget and contemn his blessed commandments, and that those who be appointed to rebuke and punish such transgressors of God's laws, suffer (without punishment) the glory of God, and his holy commandments, to be oppressed and set at naught, as we see daily they be indeed : from these causes, our sin and abomination, the Lord taketh occasion to turn his good creatures, made for our life, to be a means of our death : which never would be, were not our dishonouring and contempt of God so heinous.

For the Lord's creatures be perfectly good, and made all to comfort and rejoyce ; wholesome, clean, and pure without all infection. But seeing that the contempt of God and the filthiness of sin is neither by the clergy opened, declared, nor detected, neither by the heads of the country, and officers appointed under God and the King punished : except therefore there should nothing else live in this world than sin, abomination, and contempt of God : God is forced, for the taking away and destruction of filthy life, and filthy livers, to appoint an extraordinary magistrate to reform and punish the mother of all mischief, sin, and contempt of God's holy word. And so he altereth (not by chance, nor by the influence of stars) the wholesomeness of the air into pestilent and contagious infection ; and the meat and drink with their nutriment and food into poison and venom, that by their means sin and sinners might be slain and taken out of this world, and no longer blaspheme God.

Thus doth the word of God declare the effectual and principal cause of pestilence to be the contempt of God's word, that should keep men in order both to God and man. The breaking whereof hath always brought these plagues into these realms, as

profane writers also manifestly declare. Orosius saith, that the great dearth and famine that came amongst the Romans, in the time of Cæsar Augustus, was because Caius his nephew refused to honour the living God, as he was taught at Jerusalem, when he passed into Syria. Wherefore it is expedient, and before all things necessary (forasmuch as the plague is come into sundry places about us), for every one to try himself, what just causes of this pestilence each man hath within himself. Every Christian man and woman must search whether their religion and christianity be such, as God's word doth maintain to be good: for there is no greater occasion of pestilence, than superstition and false religion.

The bishop, parson, vicar, and curate, must examine themselves, what knowledge of God's word is in them, and what diligence they have taken to bring the people to a right knowledge, and perfect honour of God: for there is no greater danger of pestilence, than where the clergy are either ignorant of God's word, or negligent in teaching thereof.

The justices and gentlemen must look how they keep themselves and the King's Majesty's people in the true knowledge and obedience of God's laws and the King's: for nothing provoketh the pestilence more dangerously, than where such as sit and be appointed to do justice, follow their own affections with contempt and injury both to God and man; and the plague of God will revenge it.

All we, therefore, that be subjects, and live under one God and one King, must (now that God hath sent us this pestilence) see that we have true, loving, faithful, trusty, and obedient hearts, with one whole mind altogether to obey, reverence, love, help, succour, defend, and uphold with all our wits, goodness, riches, and strength, this our only King, with the magistrates and counsellors that be ap-

pointed under his Highness. For, as St. Paul saith, "He that disobeyeth and resisteth the higher powers appointed by God, resisteth God," provoketh the pestilence and vengeance of God against us. And we must take heed also that we hate not one another: if we do, the plague will not cease, and the places that yet be not infected, God shall infect, whatsoever defence man maketh against it. And although Galen of all remedies saith, "To fly the air that is infected, is best;" yet I know that Moses by the word of God saith: "Flee whither thou wilt, in case thou take with thee the contempt of God and breach of his commandment, God shall find thee out." Yea, and although many medicines be devised, in order to insure the infection to be made whole: yet notwithstanding, I know God's word saith the contrary, that he will send unto insensible, careless, and wilful sinners, such a plague and incurable a pestilence, that they shall not be delivered, but die and perish by it.

Therefore, forasmuch as sin is the occasion chiefly of pestilence, let every man eschew and avoid it both speedily and penitently, and then shall ye be preserved from the plague sufficiently, as ye shall perceive in the remedy of this dangerous plague, that beginneth to reign amongst us. For doubtless, although we could fly to Locris or Crotone, where, as Pliny saith, the pestilence never was, yet God saith, "In case we fear not him, we shall surely be infected."

The Remedy against the Pestilence.

Like as the Scripture of God only sheweth the very cause of pestilence: so doth it the very true and only remedy against it. I do not dislike the remedies that natural physic hath prescribed: yet I do not

hold them as sufficient remedies on account of their imperfection. I would that they were used also, and the remedies prescribed in God's book not omitted. For I see all the remedies that ever were devised by man, are not able to remove assuredly the pestilence from him that is infected therewithal, although they be never so excellent and good. And I find the same concerning the preservation from the pestilence devised by man; it is also insufficient for man's preservation, yet not to be contemned. For the reason of their chiefest preservation against the pestilence is very good and allowable, and yet not sufficient: which is the fleeing and departing from the place where the air is corrupt. Wherefore, for such as may, nothing is better than to flee: and except a man do, he offereth himself to a present danger of death: but yet the word of God saith plainly, that "flee whither we will, if we forsake not sin, and serve the living God, the plague shall overtake us."

And this cannot be a sufficient remedy, for there be certain persons that cannot flee although they would: as the poorer sort of people that have no friends nor place to flee unto, more than the poor house they dwell in. Likewise there be such officers of trust, as men for no cause may flee from it: as the bishop, parson, vicar, and curate, who hath the charge of those that God pleaseth to infect with the pestilence; and if they forsake their people in this plague-time, they be hirelings and no pastors, and they flee from God's people into God's high indignation. Such also as have places and offices of trust for the commonwealth, as the captains of soldiers in the time of war, judges and justices in the time of peace: in case they should flee their country, or leave their wars for the plague of pestilence, they shall never be good soldiers nor good justices for the commonwealth. And they shall be accountable to

Almighty God for all the hurt and detriment that hath happened unto the people in their absence.

Wherefore, seeing there is no certain remedy devised by man, neither for such as cannot flee, nor for them that may flee, we must seek another medicine and help at God's hand: who can and will preserve those that be whole, and make them whole that be sick, if it be expedient for man, and most for his own honour. The best preservative therefore to keep men from the pestilence is this that Moses speaketh of: "Let us do sacrifice unto the Lord, lest we be stricken with pestilence or sword." And Joshua and Caleb told the people that a faithful trust in the Lord was the best remedy for them: which if they contemned, they should find, that God there threatened (speaking to Moses), "How long will this people be unfaithful? I will strike them with pestilence, and consume them." Also David knew that the only remedy to keep Jerusalem from the plague was, that God should turn his wrath from the city for his sins and the sins of the people.

But now to bring the remedy the better to the understanding of the people, I will shew it by this place of St. Mark: "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel:" in the which words is contained the only medicine against the pestilence; and also all other diseases, if the text be well and advisedly considered, wherein Christ useth a very natural order to heal all diseases. For as the remedy naturally of all diseases is taken from those contrary conditions and qualities that work and maintain the sickness: so doth Christ in these words declare that the preservation and help of sin and wickedness (the cause of pestilence) proceedeth from virtues and conditions contrary to the qualities and nature of such things as preserve and keep this wicked sin and sickness in man. As when a man is fallen into sickness by reason of too much

cold and moisture, the remedy must be gathered naturally from the contrary, heat and drought. For this is a common and true principle, "Contraries be holpen by their contraries." If nature were too cold, it must be holpen with heat. If it be too hot, it must be cooled. If it be too moist, it must be dried. If it be too dry, it must be moistened. If it be too cold and moist, it must be heated and dried. If it be cold and dry, it must be heated and moistened. If it be too hot and moist, it must be cooled and dried. If it be too hot and dry, it must be cooled and moistened. These be very natural remedies, if they be well used with true proportion and convenient use after the rules of physic.

And as these be good and natural for the body wherein the pestilence dwelleth; even so is Christ's medicine in the first of St. Mark a more present and certain remedy for the soul that keepeth the body in life, to remove or to remedy the sin of man, which is the cause of all plagues and pestilence; in case (to remove sin, the cause of sickness) this medicine of Christ be used, as the other is used to remove the effect of sin, which is sickness. As the body is fallen into sickness by too much cold or moisture, either by nature that originally was corrupted by Adam, or by our own accustomed doing of sin; so it must be made whole by the heat of repentance and true faith in the merits of Christ Jesus, who died for the sins of the world.

For this is a true and most certain principle of all religion, "One contrary must remedy the other." Seeing Adam by his fault began our death by sin: it must be cured by Christ, who is without sin. And whereas our own works be sin and filthiness, where-withal God is displeased; we must desire the works of Christ, to work the good will and favour of our heavenly Father again. And whereas by our

own wits, wisdoms, religion, and learning, we have committed idolatry and superstition ; we must now by God's wisdom, God's word, and his most true religion, amend our faults, and turn to true and godly honouring of him. Farther, whereas our own inventions have brought us from the knowledge of God : the remedy is, that God's word must bring us to him again. For against all untruths brought in by man, the word of God is the only remedy.

The experience thereof we may have plainly in the Scripture. Whereas for the salvation of the world, God appointed Christ, his only Son, to be born, and also to be opened into the world, that by him it might be healed of all sickness and sin, as it appeareth by St. Matthew and others of the Evangelists : yet was the world so blind and so corrupted with sin, that Christ was born and opened unto them, and they of the world nothing the better, as it appeareth in St. Matthew : where St. John the Baptist in few words (which be these : " Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand") sheweth the remedy of all sins and sickness, and the means how to receive and take the same remedy. The remedy was only Christ, as he saith in St. John and also in St. Matthew : and the means to come by the remedy was to repent, as ye shall know farther hereafter when ye know what repentance is.

The same may you also see in St. John, in the dialogue between Christ and Nicodemus, a man after the judgment of the world that knew life and death, sickness and health, the cause of the one, and also of the other, as well as any learned man among all the congregation and church of the Jews ; yet indeed as ignorant of his own sickness, and also so far from the true knowledge how to come to health, as an ignorant man might be. And the cause was, that he understood not the nature of sin, as it is esteemed by the word

of God, neither the remedy thereof that God hath prescribed and appointed. Wherefore Christ told him by plain words, except he were holpen and cured of his disease and sickness by contrary remedies, he could never understand nor come to his health : and no marvel ; for he knew the sickness of sin no otherwise than his forefathers and the worldly men knew sin : that is to say, they knew such sins as were known to reason, and done by the body and outward action of men : and the same knowledge had he, and no more, of the remedy against the sickness of sin. And as his fathers and the world thought (so did he) that the merits of their sacrifices and the well doing of themselves, was a sufficient remedy to heal them both in body and in soul. Whereupon Christ most mercifully pitieth the poor man, and with contrary knowledge both of sickness and the remedy thereof, sheweth that the disease wherewith man is infected, goeth farther than reason and the outer action of the body, and occupieth the soul of man with concupiscence, rebellion, frowardness, and contumacy against God : wherefore he calleth all that man hath of himself, but flesh. And he sheweth that the remedy against this sickness cometh not of the worthiness of any sacrifice or merits of his, or any sinful man's works : but that the remedy thereof dependeth only upon the merits of his blood and passion, and sheweth the same by the comparison of the brazen serpent appointed by Moses. And he argueth this way : as the people that were stung with the serpents in the wilderness were not made whole by their own works, or for the dignity or service of any sacrifice that they offered, but by the sight of the serpent that represented Christ to come : even so Nicodemus, or any others that are stung with the serpents of sin, be not made whole by their own works or any sacrifice they can offer, but only by the merits of

Christ. And even as the people could not come to the knowledge of this remedy by the serpent, through their fathers' or their own wisdom : no more can Nicodemus or any man living come to the knowledge of the remedy for sickness and sin in our Saviour Christ, except he learn it by the word of God through the instruction of the Holy Ghost.

The same remedy also useth Christ in his words before rehearsed : " Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." In the which words our Saviour Christ sheweth all things to be considered in sin and in the remedy thereof. For in the first part of his words he declareth how that men should know the causes of sickness ; and in the second part the remedy and help for the same. The cause of sickness (as it appeareth by this word, " Repent") is, that men have by their own folly turned themselves from the truth of God to the error and fond opinion of man : from true faith to uncertain fables : from virtuous and godly works to uncleanness and corruption of life. Christ, therefore, seeing the world how it is in danger, by reason it hath forsaken the rule and wisdom of God's word, calleth it home again to a better way, bidding it to repent : as though he had said, Turn to a better mind, and leave the ways accustomed, and learn to be wise, and walk in the ways and wisdom appointed by God.

Here appeareth also, that the cause of all the dangers that Christ willed his audience to repent of, was their sin and iniquity. The cause of sin was infidelity and accustomed doing of evil. The cause of infidelity and accustomed doing of evil was ignorance or misunderstanding of God's word. The cause of ignorance or misunderstanding of God's word was Satan (God's and man's enemy), and man's willing consent to the devilish sophistry and false construing of God's word. And from these causes spring all

seases and sickness, death and everlasting damnation; from the which Christ was sent (of God's inestimable love towards us) to redeem and save us. Notwithstanding, these effects of pestilence, sickness, death, and everlasting damnation, cannot be removed, except first the causes of them be eschewed.

Wherefore, learn ye, and teach others to know the causes above mentioned, and also how they may be removed: for as long as they work their proper nature in man, so long will they bring forth their natural effects, sickness, troubles, death, and damnation. The original cause of all evil was Satan, and his ungodly consent of our forefather Adam in paradise, in crediting more the devil's sophistry and lies, than the plain and manifest word of God. And the remedy of this cause is God, who of love, against Satan's hatred, promised, in the Seed of a woman, help again for man: and that every man that becometh the devil in evil, must repent and believe God and his word in good.

Ignorance and mistaking of God's word is the second cause of evil: the remedy whereof is knowledge and right understanding of God's word.

Infidelity and accustomed doing of evil be the third cause of evil: true faith and accustomed doing of good remedyeth them.

Sin and iniquity be the causes of sickness, death, and damnation: virtue and godliness heal and remove them, that they shall not bring man to everlasting death. Although sin and sickness be not taken from man, yet doth God in Christ take away the damnation of sin, and suffereth death to destroy by sickness none other thing than the body of the sinner, so that he use this remedy ("Repent, and believe the Gospel"); and he shall at length have all the body, dead by death, out of the earth, and place it alive with the soul in heaven.

But now to use this help and remedy against the pestilence, which Christ calleth, “ Repent, and believe the Gospel.”

The sick man must remember what the first word, “ Repent,” meaneth, and how he may come by it. Repentance, that God requireth, is the return of the sinner from sin, unto a new life in Christ ; which return is an innovation and renovation of the mind of man by God’s Spirit in Christ, with denial of the former life, to begin a new and better life. And this repentance springeth from the knowledge of sin by the law of God. From the knowledge of sin cometh the hatred of sin ; from the hatred of sin proceedeth the leaving and departure from sin. From the departure from sin cometh, by faith through Christ’s blood, remission of sin. From remission of sin cometh our acceptation into God’s favour : from our acceptation into God’s favour, come the gifts of the Holy Ghost to do and work by virtuous life the will of God. From the doing in Christ the will of God come God’s defence and favour, that take from us all plagues and pestilence. From the deliverance of plagues and pestilence cometh everlasting life, as Christ saith ; and as this medicine, called, “ Repent ye, and believe the Gospel,” declareth.

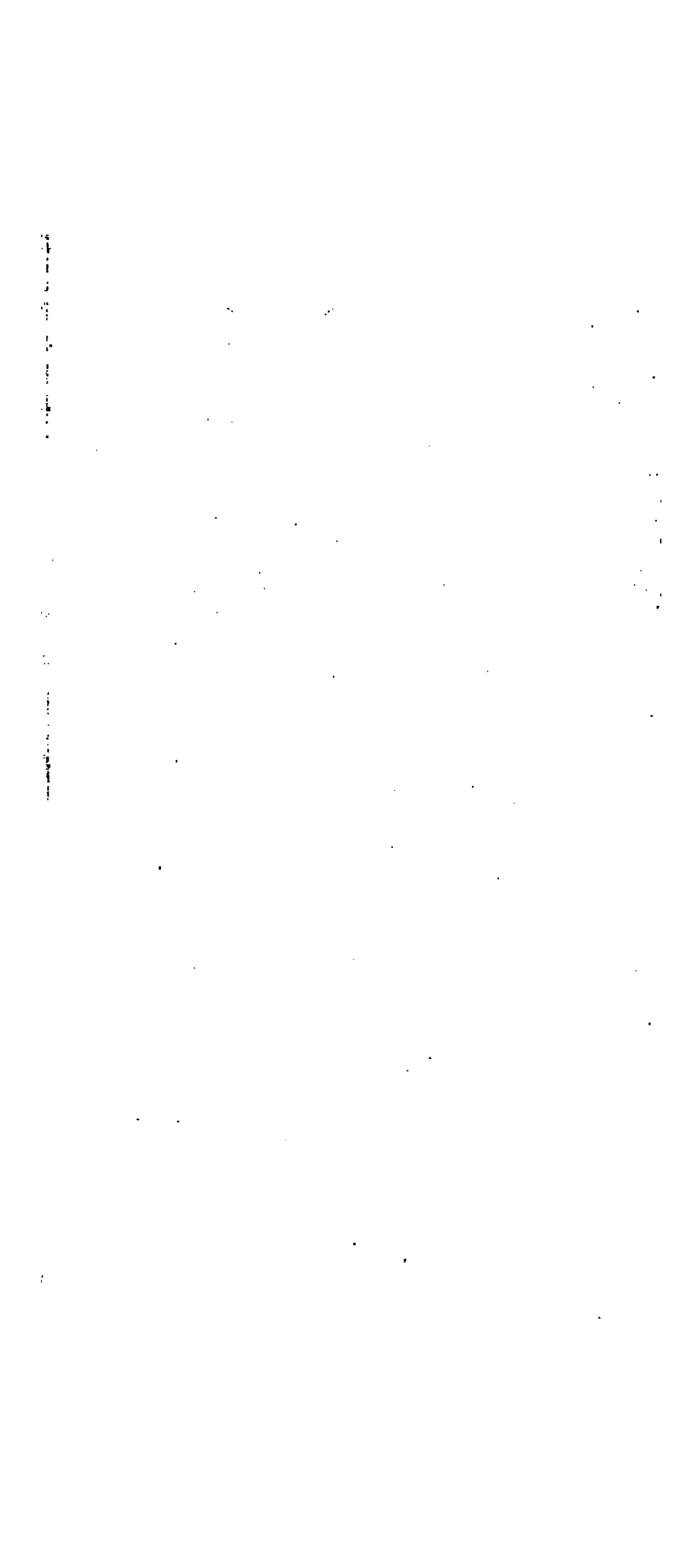
There be also many that be sick and in great danger and peril by reason of sin, and yet feel not the sore and grief thereof. Therefore they pass not whether they seek for any remedy or not : and for lack of taking heed they fall daily to more wickedness than others. Wherefore it is the office of every minister of the church diligently (and especially in the time of pestilence and plague) to call upon the people for amendment of life, and to shew them truly, diligently, and plainly this medicine of repentance, which consisteth of these parts : first, in the knowledge of sin ; secondly, in hatred of sin ; thirdly, in forsaking of sin ; fourthly, in believing the forgiveness

of sin for Christ's sake; and fifthly, to live in virtuous and godly life, to honour God, and to shew his obedience to God's law, that by sin is transgressed.

And these parts of penance (which be the very true and only medicines against sickness and sin) be known only by God's laws. For by the law of God sin is known, detested, and forsaken. If it be heard or read by men that pray unto God, they may understand it. Faith also believeth that remission of sin is shewed, opened, and offered by the Gospel: wherein be contained God's merciful promises towards sinners. And those promises sinners receive by faith, which believeth that whatsoever God hath promised in Christ, he will perform it. Faith doth credit and receive forgiveness of sins by the operation of God's holy Spirit in the poor sinner. The sinner studieth and liveth a virtuous life, being led by the Holy Ghost, and worketh to serve God with such works, as God's holy commandments command every true Christian man to work and to do. And for the better assurance and farther establishing of his repentance and acceptation into the favour of God by believing the Gospel, the poor sinner useth and receiveth the holy sacrament of Christ's precious body and blood, in remembrance that Christ died to be his medicine against sin, and the effect thereof.

Wherefore, now that it pleaseth God for our offences to shew by plagues and sickness how he is offended: let us all, that be ministers of the church and watchmen of the people, call upon them diligently to "repent and believe the Gospel," and to live a godly and virtuous life, that for Christ's sake he may turn mercifully his plagues from us; and give us his most gracious favour to preserve his universal church, our most godly sovereign Lord and King, King Edward the Sixth, his Majesty's most honourable council, and the whole realm. So be it.

May 18, 1553.



DECLARATION
OF THE
TEN HOLY COMMANDMENTS

OF
ALMIGHTY GOD,

(WRITTEN IN EXODUS, XX. DEUTERONOMY, V.)

LECTED OUT OF THE SCRIPTURE CANONICAL,

BY
JOHN HOOPER.

WITH CERTAIN NEW ADDITIONS MADE BY THE SAME
MASTER HOOPER.

"Come and see." John, i.

At London,
printed by Robert Waldegrave for Thomas Woodcocke.
A. D. 1550.

other to be servant in such a friendly and blessed society and fellowship, as these tables contain. Before therefore they were given, God commanded Moses to go down from the Mount Sinai to the people, to know of them whether they would confederate and enter into alliance with him or not. (Exod. xix.) Moses did the message, as God bade him, whereunto the people altogether consented.

So that it was fully agreed upon, that God should be their God, and they his servants, with certain conditions, containing the office of them both: God to make them a peculiar people, to prefer them above all nations of the earth, to make them a princely priesthood and a holy people. And their office was to obey, and observe his holy will and pleasure.

Here see we the alliance and confederacy made between God and man, and the writings given: likewise how it was made. But wherefore it was made, and for whose merits, yet by these texts we see not: or why God should love man, that so neglected his commandments, that favoured and loved, believed and trusted better the devil than God (Gen. iii.), and so far offended the divine majesty of God, and degenerated from grace and godliness by custom of sin and contempt of God, that he bewailed and repented that ever he had made man (Gen. vi. 6.), and decreed to destroy the creature man, that he created, as he did indeed. Not only thus destroying man, but also protesting openly, that better it had been for Judas never to have been born. (Matt. xxvi. 24.) And in 25th of Matthew, the displeasure of God is declared so great, that he appointeth man to another end, than he was created for, saying, "Depart, ye doers of iniquity, from me unto eternal fire prepared," not for man, but "for the devil and his angels."

What is now more contrary one to the other and farther at debate, than God and man, whom now we see bound in league together as very friends? Moses sheweth that only mercy provoked God unto this alliance (Deut. xix. 5—8), to receive them into grace, deliver them out of Egypt, and to possess the plentiful land of Canaan. Further, that God found just matter and occasion to expel the inhabitants of that land, and found no merits in the Israelites to give it them, for they were a stiffnecked people and intractable, as Moses layeth to their charge. Howbeit God, having respect only unto his promises made unto Adam (Gen. iii. 15), Abraham, and his posterity (Gen. xii. 3. xv. 5. xvii. 4), measuring not his mercy according to the merits of man, who was nothing but sin, looked always upon the justice and deservings, innocence and perfection of the blessed Seed promised unto Adam and unto Abraham.

God put the death of Christ as a means and arbiter of this peace. "For the testament availeth not, except it be confirmed by the death of Him that maketh the testament." (Heb. ix. 17.) The which death in the judgment of God was accepted as a satisfaction for sin from the beginning of Adam's fall, as Paul saith (Heb. vii. 1), "Christ's priesthood was and is like unto Melchizedeck, that had neither beginning nor ending," bound neither to time or place, as the priesthood of Aaron. But as God accounted in Adam's sin all mankind, being in his loins, worthy of death: so he accounted in Christ all to be saved from death, as Adam declareth by the name of his wife, calling her Eve (Gen. iii. 20), "the mother of the living," and not of the dead.

All these promises and others, that appertain unto the salvation of Adam and his posterity, were made in Christ and for Christ only, and appertained to our fathers and us, as we appertain to Christ. "He is

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the door (John, x. 9), the way, and the life." (John, xiv. 6.) He only is the mediator between God and man, without whom no man can come to the Father celestial. (John, i. 3, 6.) Because the promises of God appertained to our fathers, forasmuch as they likewise to Christ; hitherto and for ever they were preserved from hell and the pains due to Adam's sin in him, for whose sake the promise was made. The means of our peace and reconciliation with God is only in Christ, as by whose passion we are made holy. (Isa. liii. 4, 5.) Therefore Christ is called by John the Baptist (John, i. 29) "the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world."

And as the devil found nothing in Christ (John, xiv. 30) that he could condemn, likewise so now he hath nothing in us worthy of damnation, because we be comprehended and fully inclosed in him, for we be his by faith. All those, that be comprehended under the promise, belong to Christ. And as far extendeth the virtue and strength of God's promise to save man, as the rigour and justice of the law for sin to damn man. "For as by the offence and sin of one man death was extended and made common with all men unto condemnation," as Paul saith (Rom. v. 17, 18), "so by the justice of one is derived life into all men to justification."

The words of the promise made unto Adam and Abraham confirm the same: they are these: "I will put enmity and hatred between thee and the woman, between thy seed and the woman's seed, and her seed shall break thy head." (Gen. iii. 15.) For as we were in Adam before his fall, and should, if he had not sinned, have been of the same innocence and perfection that he was created in; so were we in his loins, when he sinned, and participated of his sin. And as we were in him and partakers of the ill; so were we in him, when God made him a promise of

grace ; and we are partakers of the same grace, not as the children of Adam, but as the children of promise. As the sins of Adam without privilege or exception extended and appertained unto all Adam's and every of Adam's posterity : so did this promise of grace generally appertain as well to every and singular of Adam's posterity, as to Adam : as it is more plainly expressed, Gen. xv. 17, where God promiseth to bless in the seed of Abraham all the people of the world ; and Paul maketh no diversity in Christ of Jew or Gentile. (Colos. iii. 11.)

Farther, it was never forbid, but that all sorts of people and of every progeny in the world should be made partakers of the Jews' religion and ceremonies. Farther, St. Paul (Rom. v. 15) doth by collation of Adam and Christ, sin and grace, thus interpret God's promise, and maketh not Christ inferior to Adam, nor grace unto sin. If all then shall be saved, what is to be said of those that St. Peter speaketh of (1 Pet. ii.), that shall perish for their false doctrine ? And likewise Christ saith, that the gate is straight that leadeth to life, and few enter ?

Thus the Scripture answereth, that the promise of grace appertaineth to every sort of men in the world, and comprehendeth them all ; howbeit within certain limits and bonds : the which if men neglect or pass over, they exclude themselves from the promise in Christ. As Cain was no more excluded, till he excluded himself, than Abel ; Saul than David ; Judas than Peter ; Esau than Jacob. (Matt. i. 13. Rom. xix.)

By the Scripture it seemeth that the sentence of God was given to save the one, and to damn the other, before the one loved God, or the other hated God. Howbeit these threatenings of God against Esau, if he had not of his wilful malice excluded himself from the promise of grace, should no more

have hindered his salvation; than God's threatenings against Nineveh; which, notwithstanding that God said it should be destroyed within forty days (Jon. i.), stood a great time after, and did penance.

Esau was circumcised, and presented unto the church of God by his father Isaac in all external ceremonies, as well as Jacob: and that his life and conversation were not as agreeable unto justice and equity as Jacob's, the sentence of God unto Rebecca (Gen. xxv. 23) was not in the fault, but his own malice. For there is mentioned nothing at all in that place that Esau was disinherited of eternal life, but that he should be inferior to his brother Jacob in this world; which prophecy was fulfilled in their posterity, and not in the persons themselves.

Of this acceptance of the one and reprobation of the other, concerning the promise of the earth, speaketh Malachi the Prophet, as the beginning of his book declareth, speaking in this wise (Mal. i. 23).—"I have loved you (saith the Lord), and ye say, 'Wherein hast thou loved us?' God answereth, 'Was not Esau Jacob's brother? (saith the Lord;) notwithstanding I loved Jacob, and hated Esau.' Wherein hated God Esau? the Prophet sheweth: 'I have made his possession, that was the Mount Seir, desolate as a desert or wilderness of dragons.' The which happened in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. Wherein he loved Jacob, the text declareth. God transferred the right and title that appertained unto Esau, the elder brother, to Jacob the younger; likewise the land that was promised unto Abraham and Isaac, was by legacy and testament given unto Jacob and his posterity. (Gen. xxv. 23, &c.)

St. Paul (Rom. ix. 11, &c.) useth this example of Jacob and Esau for none other purpose, but to take away from the Jews the thing that they most put their trust in; that is to say, the vain hope they had

in the carnal lineage and natural descent from the family and household of Abraham ; and likewise their false confidence they had in the keeping of the law of Moses. Paul's whole purpose is, in the Epistle, to bring man unto a knowledge of his sin, and to shew him how it may be remitted : and with many testimonies and examples of the Scripture he proveth man to be saved only by mercy for the merits of Christ, which are apprehended and received by faith, as he at large sheweth in the 3d, 4th, and 5th chapters of the same Epistle.

In the understanding of the which three chapters aright is required a singular and exact diligence ; for it seemeth by those places that Paul concludeth and in a manner includeth the divine grace and promise of God within certain terms and limits ; that only Christ should be efficacious and profitable in those, that apprehend and receive this abundant grace by faith ; and to such as have not the use of faith, neither Christ nor God's grace to appertain. (Rom. xi. 32. Gal. viii. 22.)

Now seeing no man by reason of this natural incredulity, born (Gal. iii. 22) and begotten with us, can believe and put such confidence in God as he requireth by his law, as experience of our own weakness declareth, though man have years and time to believe ; yet the promise of God in Christ appertaineth to no man. This sentence is plain in the last chapter of St. Mark (Mark, xvi. 16) : " He that believeth not, shall be damned." Howbeit, we know by the Scripture, that, notwithstanding this imperfection of faith, many shall be saved, and likewise notwithstanding that God's promise be general unto all people of the world, yet many shall be damned. (Matt. xi. 28.) These two points therefore must be diligently discussed : first, how this faith, being imperfect, is accepted of God ; then, how we be ex-

cluded from the promise of grace that extendeth to all men. (1 Tim. ii. 4.)

I will not rehearse now the minds of others, but, as briefly and as simply as I can, declare the mind of the Scripture in this matter.

St. Paul calleth this servitude of sin, naturally remaining in our corrupted nature, sometimes, *apeitheian*; then, *amartian*; at another time, *astheneian*. The first word signifieth an impersuasibility, diffidence, incredulity, contumacy, or disobedience. The second signifieth error, sin, or deceit. The third betokeneth weakness, imbecility, or imperfection. So writeth Paul (1 Cor. xv.), man's body to be first born in imperfection or imbecility. Also that God concludeth all men under infidelity. (Rom. xi. 32.) In another place, that the Scripture doth conclude all men under sin. (Gal. iii. 22.)

In those three places thou mayest see the three words that I rehearsed before, by which Paul describes the infirmities of man, which infirmities are translated unto Christ. (Isa. liii. John, 1.) Not so that we should be clean delivered from them, as though they were dead in our nature, or our nature changed, or that they should not provoke us any more to ill; but that they should not damn us, because Christ satisfied for them in his own body. (John, i. 29.) And Paul saith (Rom. v. 8), that Christ died for sinners that were infirm, and calleth those sinners the enemies of God. Howbeit he calleth not them *theostygas* in the Scripture, to wit, contemners of God. Every man is called in the Scripture wicked, and the enemy of God for the privation and lack of faith and love that he oweth to God. *Impii vocantur qui non omnino sunt pii*; that is, they are called wicked, that in all things honour not God, believe not in God, and observe not his commandments as they should do; which we cannot

o by reason of this natural infirmity or hatred of the flesh, as Paul calleth it (Rom. viii. 7), against God. In this sense taketh Paul this word, wicked, when he saith that Christ died for the wicked. (Rom. v. 8.) So must we interpret St. Paul, and like his words, or else no man should be damned.

Now we know that Paul himself, with St. John, and Christ, damneth the contemners of God, or such as willingly continue in sin, and will not repent. Those the Scripture excludeth from the general promise of grace. Thou seest by the places afore rehearsed, that though we cannot believe in God as undoubtedly as is required, by reason of this our natural sickness and disease; yet for Christ's sake in the judgment of God we are accounted as faithful believers, for whose sake this natural disease and sickness is pardoned, by what name soever St. Paul calleth the natural infirmity or original sin in man. And this imperfection or natural sickness taken of Adam excludeth not the person from the promise of God in Christ, except we transgress the limits and bounds of this original sin by our own folly and malice, and either of a contempt or hate of God's word we fall into sin, and transform ourselves into the image of the devil. Then we exclude by this means ourselves from the promises and merits of Christ, who only receives our infirmities and original disease, and not the contempt of him and his law.

Further, the promises appertain to such as repent. Therefore Isaiah said without exception, that the infirmities of all men were cast upon his blessed shoulder. It is our office therefore to see we exclude not ourselves from the general grace promised to all men. It is not a Christian man's part to attribute his salvation to his own free will with the Pelagian, and extenuate original sin: nor to make God the author of ill and our damnation, with the Manichee;

nor yet to say, God hath written fatal laws, as the Stoic, and with necessity of destiny violently pulleth one by the hair into heaven, and thrusteth the other headlong into hell. But ascertain thyself by the Scripture, what be the causes of reprobation, and what of election.

The cause of rejection or damnation is sin in man, which will not hear neither receive the promise of the Gospel; or else, after he hath received it, by accustomed doing of ill falleth either into a contempt of the Gospel, and will not study to live thereafter, or else hateth the Gospel, because it condemneth his ungodly life, and would there were neither God nor Gospel to punish him for doing of ill. This sentence is true, howsoever men judge of predestination: God is not the cause of sin, nor would have man to sin. "Thou art not a God that willeth sin." (Ps. v.) And it is said (Hos. xiii. 9), "Thy perdition, oh Israel! is of thyself, and thy succour only of me."

The cause of our election is the mercy of God in Christ. Howbeit, he that will be partaker of this election must receive the promise in Christ by faith. For therefore we be elected, because afterward we are made the members of Christ. (Eph. i. Rom. viii.) Therefore as in the justification or remission of sin there is a cause, though no dignity at all, in the receiver of his justification, and so we judge him by the Scripture to be justified, and to have remission of his sin, because he received the grace promised in Christ: so we judge of election by the event or success that happeneth in the life of man, those only to be elected that by faith apprehend the mercy promised in Christ. Otherwise we should not judge of election. (Eph. i. 5. Rom. viii. 29.) For Paul saith plainly (Rom. viii. 16), "They that be led by the

Spirit of God are the children of God :” and that “the Spirit of God doth testify with our spirits that we are the children of God.” Being admonished therefore by Scripture, we must leave sin, and do the works commanded of God : or else it is a carnal opinion, that we have blinded ourselves withal, of fatal destiny, and yet will not save us. And in case there follow not our knowledge of Christ amendment of life, it is not lively faith that we have, but a vain knowledge and mere presumption.

Christ saith, “No man cometh to me, except my Father draw him.” Many men understand these words in a wrong sense, as though God required in a reasonable man no more than in a dead post, and mark not the words that follow : “Every man that heareth and learneth of my Father cometh unto me.” God draweth with his word and the Holy Ghost, but man’s duty is to hear and learn, that is to say, receive the grace offered, consent to the promise, and not to repugn the God that calleth. God doth promise the Holy Ghost unto them that ask him, and not to them that condemn him.

We have the Scripture daily in our hands, read it, and hear it preached. God’s mercy ever continueth the same. Let us think verily that now God calleth, and convert our lives to it. Let us obey it, and beware we suffer not our foolish judgments to wander after the flesh ; lest the devil wrap us in darkness, and teach us to seek the election of God out of the Scripture. Although we be of ourselves bondmen unto sin, and can do no good by reason our original and race are vicious ; yet hath not the devil induced wholly his similitude into any of Adam’s posterity, but only into those that condemn and of a set purpose and a destined malice hate God, as Pharaoh and Saul. The one gathered all his men of war (Exod. xiv.), and would fight with God and

his church, rather than obey his commandment. The other would against God's express will and pleasure kill David (1 Sam. xviii. 11), that God had ordained to be King. These sins Christ calleth "the sin against the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xii. 32. Mark, iii. 29. Luke, xii. 10) : St. John, "sin unto death" (1 John, v. 16) : St. Paul, "voluntary or willing sin" (Heb. x. 26).

We must therefore judge by the Scripture, and believe all things there spoken. Know thereby the will of God, and search not to know the thing that appertaineth nothing to thine office. Remember, how crafty a workman the devil is, and what practice he hath used with others. Chiefly and before all things he goeth about to take this persuasion, "that God's word is true," out of man's heart : as he did with Adam (Gen. iii. 45), who thought nothing less than to die, as God said. Then thought he wholly to have printed his own image in Adam for the image of God, and to bring him to an utter contempt and hatred of God for ever, as he had brought him to a diffidence and doubt of his word. Here let us all take heed of ourselves, who, daily by the word of God being admonished of ill, yet amend not.

We shall find at length, God to be just in his word, and he will punish with eternal fire our contumacy and inobedience, which fire shall be no less hot, than his word speaketh of. So did Satan also persuade Saul, that God was so good, that, though he offended, he would not punish him as he said but be again pleased with a fat sacrifice. This doctrine is therefore necessary to be known of all men : that God is just and true, and requireth of us fear and obedience. As Christ saith, "He that seeth me is true." Daniel speaketh thus of his justice "The Lord is just in all his ways," And understand

that his justice extendeth to two divers ends: the one is, that he would all men to be saved; the other end, to give every man according to his acts.

To obtain the first end of his justice, as many as be not utterly wicked, and may be holpen, partly with threatenings, and partly with promises he allureth, and provoketh them unto amendment of life. The other part of his justice rewardeth the obedience of the good, and punisheth the inobedience and contempt of the ill. These two justices the elders do call *correctivam* and *retributivam*. Jonas the Prophet speaketh of the first, and Christ of the second. God would all men to be saved, and therefore provoketh, now by fair means, now by foul, that the sinner should satisfy his just and righteous pleasure. Not that the promises of God appertain unto such as will not repent, or his threatenings unto him that doth repent; but those means he useth to save his creature. This way useth he to nurture us until such time as his Holy Spirit work such a perfection in us, that we will obey him, though there were no pain nor joy mentioned at all.

Therefore look not only upon the promise of God, but also, what diligence and obedience he requireth of thee, lest thou do exclude thyself from the promise. There was promised unto all those, that departed out of Egypt with Moses, the land of Canaan. Howbeit, for disobedience of God's commandments, there were but two that entered. Of the other part thou seest, that of the menaces and horrible threatenings of God, that Nineveh the great city should be destroyed within forty days, nothing appertained unto the Ninevites, because they did penance, and returned to God. In them seest thou (Christian reader) the mercy of God, and the general promise of salvation performed in Christ, for whose sake only God and man were set at one. So that

they received the preaching of the Prophet, and took God for their God, and God took them to be his people, and, for a certainty thereof, revoked his sentence that gave them but forty days of life. They likewise promised obedience unto his holy laws and commandments, as God give us all grace to do: that though we be infirm and weak to all virtues, we exclude not ourselves by contempt or negligence from the grace promised to all men. Thus farewell in Christ.

A DECLARATION

OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

What the Law is.

that the least part of the Scripture requireth writer both judgment and circumspection, the interpretation of one place repugn not the God's word in another place; how much more, circumspection, fear, and love require the rules of the Ten Commandments, in the which attained the effect and whole Scripture. And ever is said or written by the Prophets, Christ, Apostles, it is none other thing but the interpretation and exposition of these ten words or Ten Commandments. So that it were no need at all to the mind of any doctor or expositor, to know the will and pleasure of God manifested unto the world in his word, would they that have leisure to read the Scripture, study therein themselves; or be appointed to the ministry of the church: sermons declare to the unlearned, what and which commandment the Evangelist, Prophet, or Apostle, that he preacheth, declareth. If this were then it were no need to bestow so many years in writing the gloss and interpretation of man. For he that write or say what he pleaseth, he, that understandeth the text, shall be always able to judge whether he did write true or false, and so establish his faith and knowledge upon the word of God, and not upon the interpretation of man; conform all his actions to this rule and canon of the Ten Commandments, and not unto the decrees of man, as God requireth.

These ten words have been largely and at length written upon by many great and famous clerks: so notwithstanding, as they have yet left sufficient matter unto their successors, whereupon they may exercise both their learning and eloquence as in a thing most inscrutable, there is no acumen nor excellency of wit, no learning, no eloquence, that can comprehend or compass the doctrine and mystery of the learning that is contained in these commandments. They teach abundantly and sufficiently in few words, how to know God, to follow virtue, and to come to eternal life.

Wherefore it behoveth every man of God to know as perfectly these Ten Commandments, as he knoweth his own name; that all his works, words, and thoughts, may be governed according unto the mind and pleasure of this law. Likewise, because we may by the knowledge hereof understand other men's writings and commandments, whether they be of God or of man, profitable or pernicious, leading to life eternal or to death everlasting. They teach what God requireth in the heart, and what in external conversation, both to God and man; what is to be done in the commonwealth, and what in every private cause. What is the superior's duty, and what the inferior's. What the husband's duty, and what the wife's. What the father's, and what the son's. What to be done to a citizen or landsman, and what to a stranger. What in the time of peace, and what in the time of war. So that in these ten precepts every man may see what his office is to do without further travail or study in any other sort of learning. I purpose, therefore, by God's grace, as well as I can, to open by other places of the Scripture the true sense and meaning of these Ten Commandments simply and plainly, that the unlearned

may take profit by the same. This order I will observe—

First, shew what this word, law or commandment, meaneth.

Secondly, how the law should be used.

Thirdly, prepare the reader's mind, that he may always read and hear these commandments with fruit and commodity.

Fourthly, interpret every commandment severally, that the reader may perceive what good the Giver of the law requireth of every man that professeth his name.

Justinian saith, that "the law is a faculty or science of the thing that is good and right," as Celsus there defineth. Or thus, "the law is a certain rule or canon to do well by, which ought to be known and kept of all men." Cicero saith, that "the law is a certain rule proceeding from the mind of God, persuading right, and forbidding wrong."

So that "the law is a certain rule, or directory, shewing what is good, and what is ill; what is virtue, and what is vice; what profitable, and what unprofitable; what to be done, and what to be left undone." This declaration of the law generally appertaineth unto all the kinds, members, and particular laws, made either for the body or for the soul. So that whosoever be ignorant of the laws and rules that appertain unto the science or art that he professeth, can never come to the end or perfection that his profession requireth. As for example, the end of a Christian man is eternal life, and his profession is, to know and learn the law and canons that most plainly and sincerely lead him unto this end of eternal felicity.

The law of God is a certain doctrine, shewing what we should be, what we should do, and what leave undone, requiring perfect obedience towards

God, and advertising us that God is angry and displeased with sin, and will punish eternally such as perform not all things perfectly contained in the law, as we may read Matt. xxii. Exod. xx. 1. Deut. vi. Those places shew that God requireth of us perfect obedience; What pain is due to the transgressor ye may read (Deut. xxviii. 15), "Cursed be he that fulfilleth not the law." And likewise (Matt. xxv. 41), "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, into eternal fire."

I declare now, good reader, what the law is, and not how it may be fulfilled. That I defer unto the end of the exposition of the law. Howbeit, I would thou shouldest most diligently mark this definition or declaration, "what God's law is;" that thou mayst know what difference is between the law of God and the law of man. Man's laws only require external and civil obedience; God's laws, both external and internal.

Now he, that is ignorant of the means, is ignorant of the end: being ignorant of the cause, he must needs be ignorant of the effect. Only by the law of God the means are known: therefore only the law of God, if we will come to the end that God would have us to do, is diligently to be learned: for like as the physician cannot communicate his health unto the sick patient, or the living man his life unto the dead body of another (but every man enjoyeth his own health, and liveth with his own life); so profiteth not him that is unlearned the knowledge of another man, but every man must know and learn himself the law of God, if he will be saved. As he, that will be a physician, must learn the precepts that teach physic; a musician the rules of music; the orator the rules of rhetoric; the ploughman the rules of husbandry; and so every person the rules that belong to his profession, or else he shall never profit in his science or art, nor be ac-

counted a craftsman that knoweth the principles of his craft : no more before the majesty of God is he accounted a Christian man, that knoweth not perfectly the commandments of God, though he be christened, and braggeth of the name ever so much.

And because that no man should excuse his ignorance, and say the Bible is too long, and containeth so high mysteries and secrets, that the labouring man hath neither sufficient time neither convenient understanding to learn the law and commandments of God ; it pleased his infinite goodness to collect and gather together the contents and sum of the whole law into so short and compendious an abridgment, that no science of the world hath its principles or general rules concluded with so few words.

Experience and proof declare the same. The logician hath no less than ten general rules, called predicaments, wherein is contained the whole matter of his art. The rhetorician, three manner and divers kinds of causes, demonstrative, judicial, and deliberative. The whole body of the law civil, these three principles, " Live honestly, hurt no man, and give every man his." The physician, as many principles as be kinds of diseases. The heavenly God eternal hath concluded all the doctrine celestial in ten words or commandments. (Exod. xx. 1, &c.) And yet, for a further help of our unapt memory to retain the will of God, he hath gathered the said Ten Commandments into two : " Love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." (Deut. v. 6. Matt. xxii. 37, &c. Mark, xii. 28, &c.) So that every dull and hard-witted man may sooner learn the principles and general rules of Christ's religion than of any other art or science, if he give his diligence any thing at all for the space of one month.

There be many causes that should provoke man unto the study and knowledge of this law. First, the profit that cometh thereof, which is expressed by

Christ: "This is life eternal, to know thee, O Father, and Him that thou hast sent, Jesus Christ." (John, xvii. 3.) David the Prophet desired the knowledge of this law, and so copiously expresseth the commodity thereof in the most holy Psalm (Psa. cxix.), that nothing of this world may be compared to it; for it leadeth to eternal life. What commodities it bringeth in this world it is declared Deut. xxviii. Psa. cxxviii. "If thou hear the voice of thy Lord God, and observe it, thou shalt be blessed in the field and at home; blessed in all things that thou takest in hand to do:" read the chapter. "If thou wilt not learn the will of thy Lord, thou shalt be cursed in the field and at home, and unfortunate in all thy acts."

Further, without the knowledge and obedience of this law no person in the world can justly and conveniently serve in his vocation or condition of life, of what degree soever he be. Wherefore Moses commanded that no man should decline from this law, neither to the right hand nor to the left; meaning by these words that no man should add or take any thing from it, but simply observe it, as it is given and written unto us. From this right line and true rule of God's word man erreth divers ways, sometimes by ignorance, because he knoweth not or will not know, that only the express word of God sufficeth. He holdeth with the most part, and condemneth the better, as it is to be seen at this present day. This reason taketh place; "It is allowed of the most part, and stablished by so many holy and learned bishops, therefore it is true;" yet they cannot by the Scripture prove either the learning or the life of their doctors to be good.

The second way that leadeth from the word of God is many times the power and authority of this world. As we see by the Bishop of Rome and all

his adherents, who give more credence and faith unto one charter and gift of Constantinus than to the whole Bible.

Another erreth by mistaking of the time, making his superstition far older than it is : he will not forsake falsehood for the truth, and saith thus : " My father believed, and should I believe the contrary ? " Thus rather will he give credit to his father, being blind, than unto God, his greater Father, that seeth ; to the law of man more credit, than to the law of God. As the knowledge of man is thus withdrawn from the word of God by ignorance and ill-used customs, so is the life and conversation of man likewise not governed by the word of God, but with accustomed fraud and guile, every man in his vocation and condition of life. The spirituality with false received and ill deserved teaching : the temporality with false contracts and preposterous buying and selling. The princes and superior powers of the earth for the most part, and all learned men, either in maintaining a wrong religion, or in not restoring the true, decline far from this simple and sincere verity contained in God's word. Some dispense with a less ill to avoid a greater harm. Some prescribe laws for the conscience of man for a time, until it may be farther deliberated upon or approved good by a general council. These men grievously offend themselves, and cause others to do the same. In case the law made for the time seem not good unto such as shall at a more leisure have the examination thereof, the law for the mean time shall be condemned as heretical and pernicious.

Then put the case, that many, or at the least some of those that led their conscience after the law, made for the mean time, die ; how standeth then the case with those departed souls that were deceived whilst they lived by false doctrine ? They doubtless are lost

for ever and without time, if they died in any error of the catholic faith, as Christ saith, speaking of false interpreters of the word of God (Luke, vi. 39), "If the blind lead the blind (he saith), not only he that leadeth shall fall into the ditch, but both." Therefore it is not sufficient that people have a law for the mean time, but whatsoever the conscience beginneth withal, it must end in the same: that is to say, no law at all should be spoken of concerning the conscience, but the only word of God, which never altereth nor can be altered. David in the 119th Psalm proveth the immutability of God's word by two strong reasons; if heaven and earth made by the word cannot be altered, how much more the word itself. Read the two verses that begin with the letter named *Lamed*, "Thy word, Lord, abideth for ever, as the heavens do testify."

Unto the which law the conscience of man in matters of faith is bound only. For whensoever or whosoever prescribeth any law for the cause of religion, and giveth it this title ("for the mean time, until it may be judged by a general council, or otherwise decreed by the assembly of learned men"), the author of the law declareth himself not to know whether his law be true or false, leading to hell or to heaven, to save the conscience of man, or to damn it; but leaveth it in doubt, and maketh it as uncertain as those do that shall have the censure and judgment thereof preferred unto their own discretion and learning. I wish therefore and heartily pray unto Almighty God to put into the hearts of all superior powers of the earth grace and knowledge to choose four indifferent judges to appease all controversies in religion.

If the clergy should judge, the world would and might say, they are too partial, and for many respects would too much favour their own commodity. If

false doctrine may corrupt them, though the nature thereof be (as Paul saith) to infect as a cancer. So God many times will not that things do execute their natural operation. As we read of the bush which burned, and yet consumed not (Exod. iii. 2): likewise of the three children in the fiery furnace (Dan. iii. 25). And as Christ saith, that his sheep hearkened not unto the voice of the false preachers (John, x. 5), as many therefore as died before us, seduced by false preachers without repentance, the Scripture condemneth.

As many as believed them not, but trusted to the Scripture, or else were deceived, yet called for grace before they died, live eternally in joy and solace, and are saved, as John saith, in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. ii.) I judge therefore in this point God to be no more severe than the Scripture teacheth, wherein he teacheth us what we should believe and judge of him. Thus I have spoken largely and truly to admonish my good reader to beware of man's laws in the cause of religion. As touching the superior powers of the earth, it is not unknown unto all them that have read and marked the Scriptures, that it appertaineth nothing to their office to make any law to govern the consciences of their subjects in religion, but to reign over them in this case as the word of God commandeth. (Deut. xvii.)

Howbeit, in their realms, provinces, and jurisdictions, they may make what laws they will, and as many as they will, command them to be kept as long as it pleaseth them, and change them at their pleasure, as they shall see occasion for the wealth and commodity of their realms; as we do see in all notable commonwealths amongst the Greeks and Romans and others. Unto the which superior powers we owe all obedience, both of body and goods, and likewise our daily prayers for them to Almighty

God to preserve their honours in grace and quietness (Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 13. Matt. xxi. 21.) And as many divers commonwealths as there be, so many divers laws may there be. Howbeit a christened kings and kingdoms with other magistrates should reign by one law, and govern the churches of their realms only by the word of God which is never to be changed, as I declared afore in the definition of God's law, that it is a rule never to be changed by superior power or inferior. So doth the holy Prophet David (that honoured God, reverence the powers of the earth, and loved the common good of people) teach (Psa. xxv. 4): "Shew me, good Lord, thy way, and lead me in a right path, for fear of those that lay wait for me." So commandeth Jeremiah (xxii. 22), to learn the law at the mouth of God.

I follow therefore the commandment of God persuading every man to learn his faith in his law as Moses did, commending the law unto the priests the sons of Levi (Deut. xxxi. 11, 12, &c.): not only that they should know it, but shew it unto the whole multitude of the people, men, women, children, and strangers, that they might hear it, learn it, fear the Lord God, and observe his commandments. So Christ commanded his Apostles to preach, and their audience to hear the thing he commanded. (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark, xvi. 15. With what diligence, and how it should be preached learn in Neh. viii. 9.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Use of the Law.

It is well known by the places afore rehearsed that the law of God requireth an inward and perfect obedience unto the will of God. The which this nature of men, corrupted by original sin, cannot

perform, as St. Paul proveth manifestly to the Romans. There remaineth in man as long as he liveth ignorance and blindness, that he knoweth not God nor his law, as he ought to do, but rebelleth by contumacy against God. For no man suffereth God's visitations and punishments with such patience as is required. No man can abide to hear his faults rebuked by the law, but hateth his admonitors, and would that there were neither God nor law, so that he might unpunished satisfy his pleasure. Likewise the will is so froward and perverse, that it willett nothing of God or of his law, if it diminish any part of such goods or pleasure as the world requireth : as we may see by daily defection and departure from the knowledge of God's word in those that once were as ardent as fire, but now as the Galarenes did (Matt. viii. 34. Mark, v. 1, &c. Luke, viii. 26, &c.), they desire Christ to depart out of their country, rather than they would lose their swine. Where now is the will that freely and frankly would forsake all the goods of the world, and also this mortal life, rather than to leave Jesus Christ, which, as John saith (vi. 68), only bath the word of eternal life ?

It is not needful to prove this perverseness and wicked resistance against God and virtue by the example of others, but every man may find himself too much infected with this disease, would he look upon his own life, and be as equal a judge of himself, as he is timorous in judging of others. Then should he feel the same ill in himself, that he seeth in another, and see every man to be damned before God, except such as believe in Jesus Christ, and study to live after his law. (Rom. v. 1.)

Seeing the works of the law cannot deserve remission of sin, nor save man, yet God requireth our diligence and obedience unto the law, yet it is neces-

sary to know the use of the law, and why it is given us.

The first use is civil and external, forbidding and punishing the transgression of politic and civil ordinance, as Paul writeth : " The law is given to the unjust." (1 Tim. i. 9.) Wherefore God commandeth the magistrates and superior powers of the earth to punish the transgressors of the law made for the preservation of every commonwealth, as we read (Deut. xix.), " Thou shalt remove the ill done in the commonwealth, that others may fear to do the same." Thou shalt have no pity upon the transgressor, for such pity as is used of man against this commandment towards the transgressors is rather a maintenance of ill, than a work of mercy.

The second use of the law is to inform and instruct man aright, what sin is, to accuse us, to fear us, and to damn us and our justice, because we perform not the law as it is required. (Rom. i. and vii.) Howbeit the law concludeth all men under sin, not to damn them, but to save them, if they come to Christ. (Rom. xi. Gal. iii.)

These two uses of the law appertain as well unto the infidels, as to them that believe : to such as be not regenerated, as to those that be regenerated : for those, that she cannot bring to Christ, she damneth.

The third use of the law is to shew unto the Christians, what works God requireth of them. For he would not that we should feign works of our own brains to serve him withal, as the bishops' laws that teach another faith and other works than the Old Testament or the New : but requireth us to do the works commanded by him, as it is written Matt. xv. 9, " They worship me in vain with the precepts of men." Therefore David saith (Psa. cxix. 105),

“ Thy word (Lord God) is the light unto my feet.” By the knowledge of the law we judge all other men’s writings, Christians and heathens, whether they write well or ill. And without a right knowledge in this law, no doctrine can be known, whether it be true or false.

This law judgeth, who defended the better part, Marcion or Tertullian ; Augustine or Arius ; Christ and his Apostles, or Caiaphas and his college of Scribes and Pharisees ; the poor preachers, that with danger of life set forth the glory of God, or the Pope with his college of cardinals that with wicked laws study to deface the glory and majesty of Christ’s church ; where and what is the catholic church of the Christians, and where the synagogue of antichrist. No falsehood can be hid, if men seek the truth with this light.

If we examine our deeds or other men’s by this law or canon, we shall soon perceive whether they please God or displease. If we be praised and have an honest estimation amongst people, let us bring both our conscience and praise of the world unto this rule of God’s word, and then shall every man judge himself, whether he be inwardly the same man that people esteem him for outwardly. In case man sustain likewise dispraise and contempt of such as be in the world, if the law of God bear testimony with his conscience, that it is rather the malice of the world than his demerits that oppresseth thus his good fame with the burden of slander ; he shall rather rejoice that God hath preserved him from the crimes that he is falsely accused of, than impatiently suffer the malicious world maliciously to judge good to be evil, as it is their accustomed manner.

This law judgeth that Aristotle in his *Morals* teacheth better doctrine, when he condemneth the external fact, in case the mind and will concur not

to the doing thereof, than the bishops in their decrees, that attribute the remission of sin neither to contrition, nor to faith, nor to Christ, but unto the external sprinkling of a drop of water. For thus they say of the water and of the bread in the exorcism or conjuration of the water, "I conjure thee in the name of God," as it is in the beginning of the conjuration, "to be a water blessed to expel all the power of the devil." Of the bread thus, "Bless, Lord, this bread, that as many as taste thereof may receive health both of body and soul." By this law thou mayst judge who defendeth the better opinion, Numa Pompilius, who forbad images, or else the bishops' laws, that say, idols can teach the unlearned people, and be to be used. Bring the matter to judgment, and see which opinion God's law will defend. "Thou shalt make no image, &c." Whose law is more consonant with God's laws—the decrees and precepts of Cato, that say, "Love thy father, and fear the magistrate;" or the bishops' laws, that park young children in cloisters, that never know their parents' need; and likewise exempt the clergy from all obedience to the higher powers?

God's laws say with Cato, "Honour thy father, and every man be subject unto the superior powers." The Romans reprehended and deposed likewise the tyrant Nero for his cruelty, and killed the vicious prince Tarquinus Sextus for vitiating of the chaste matron Lucretia. The bishops' laws say thus, If the Pope care neither for his own health nor for his brothers; be found unprofitable and negligent in his works; further, a man apt to do no good, that hurteth himself and others, leadeth with him people innumerable by legions unto the devil to be punished with him in pains most dolorous for ever: being Pope, no mortal man should presume to reprehend his faults, for he judgeth all men, and is to be judged

of no man. What law was there ever written more pernicious or contrary unto God's laws than this?

Cyril against Julian allegeth the writings of the philosopher Pythagoras, who proveth that there is one only God, who made and preserveth only the things made. So do Sophocles, Cicero, Seneca. Bring these ethnic laws unto the word of God with the law of bishops, that teach the invocation and aid of saints departed out of this world, and then thou shalt see that the ethnics' laws are approved by God's word, and the bishops' laws condemned. For God's law saith, "I am the Lord thy God, and thou shalt have no more gods before me." And if we pray for any thing, God's word commandeth us to ask in Christ's name (John, xiv. 13). Seeing the knowledge and use of God's word is so necessary, and only telleth us what is good and what is ill, what true and what false, every man should give diligence to know it, setting all other business of the world apart.

CHAPTER III.

A Preparation unto the Ten Commandments.

Moses, before he repeateth the Ten Commandments in the book of Deuteronomy, prescribeth certain necessary rules and instructions, which he useth as preparatives and means to dispose and make apt the hearts of the people to receive this holy and most blessed sermon of Almighty God, the Ten Commandments, with condign honour and reverence; and that these laws and precepts might work their operation and virtue in man, which is to purge and cleanse the soul and mind from all unwholesome and contagious disease and sickness of sin, and to preserve the body in health and all honesty of life.

As a purgation made for the body (which Galen doth call a cleansing of such humours as be hurtful),

many times worketh not its operation by reason of the ill temperament of the body, or else of the region that too much by reason of the heat thereof draweth the humours of man into the exterior parts of the body: so the word of God poured into the ears and understandings of man, worketh not many times its operation in cleansing the soul from the humours and corruption of sin by reason of the ill temperature and disposition of the persons that use to read and hear the Scripture. As the physician therefore giveth the patient first some preparative to dispose and make apt the body to receive the purgation with fruit and commodity, so doth Moses prepare first to make his auditors apt to hear the commandments, that afterward they might receive them with fruit and profit. How to proceed in the science and practice of physic, learn of Galen or Hippocrates, or of such as profess that art.

My purpose is to shew, how Moses proceedeth in the celestial science of divinity, to cure the soul of man. He prescribeth unto his audience seven rules, or precepts, wherewith he prepareth them unto the receiving of the Ten Commandments, and without them it availeth nothing to hear or read the commandments, or any other place of the Scripture.

The first rule is, confidence and a right persuasion of God's word, that all his promises be true; and that he will doubtless give the good promised unto the good, and the ill promised unto the ill, though it seem never so impossible unto the flesh. This preparative is most necessary for all men that will be the disciples and hearers of God's word. For when men think that God is not indeed as severe to punish sin, as it is written in his commandments that he is; and likewise that he will favour and preserve them that fear him; they never take profit, nor ever shall,

in hearing or reading the Scripture ; for they have no more evidence to it than to a vain and faithless tale.

This unbelief and incredulity towards God's word is the occasion and let, that the word heard or read worketh not its operation, and the man no better at night than in the morning, in age than in youth. Moses therefore persuadeth them unto a certain right confidence, saying, " I have presented before your face the land which the Lord promised to give unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to their posterity. Come and possess ye the land." (Deut. i. 8.) Jacob and his posterity were in such bondage in Egypt, that it seemed impossible that ever they should possess the land of Canaan promised by God. Read the fourteen first chapters of Exodus, and see then, as thou canst not choose, but believe him to be true in the one promise of his help towards the good : so believe him that he will likewise punish the ill. And though he suffer and dissemble for a time at our sin, to call us unto penance (Rom. ii. 4) ; yet at length we shall be assured he will keep promise as well in punishing the ill, as in doing good to those that repent. If thou read the Scripture, thou shalt find examples of both, how he favoured and kept promise with the good and the bad. Noah saved and his family ; the whole world drowned with water. Lot saved, and the cities burned. Joshua and Caleb entered the land promised ; all the rest died for their sin in the desert. If thou canst not read to stablish thy faith in the word of God, yet canst thou lack no master to teach thee this confidence in God. Turn thine eye on which side thou list, up or down. Behold the birds of the air and the flowers of the field (Matt. vi. 26. Luke, xii. 24), and acknowledge not only the power of God, that made them ; but also his providence in feeding and appareling them : for they be seals and confirma-

tions of God's promises, who will clothe thee, feed thee, and help thee in all necessities. They were not created only to be eaten and smelled unto, but to teach thee to credit and believe God's promises. (Matt. vi. 30.)

The second rule or preparative is, that thou have a right opinion of the magistrates and superior powers of the earth, that thou give them no more, neither less honour and reverence than the word of God commandeth. This he declareth by the twelve princes that were sent to explore and search the privities and condition of the land of Canaan. Two of them persuaded the people to believe God's promise, and not to fear the people that dwelt in the land; but unto these godly princes was no faith or credit given by the people. The princes who persuaded the thing contrary unto God were believed by the people, and their counsel admitted. By this we learn, that such magistrates, as persuade the people by God's word, should be believed and obeyed, the others not: in the cause of conscience God only must be heard (Acts, iv. 19. Matt. x. 28), or else the people shall fail of a right faith. For he, that knoweth not what his duty is to God and his laws, will believe rather a lie with his forefathers, than the truth with the word of God; and this man is no meet auditor nor disciple of the word of God.

For lack of this preparative, the world hath erred from the truth this many years, to the dishonour of God and danger of Christian souls. Men do not look what God's word saith, but extol the authority of man's laws, preferring the decree of a general or provincial council before the word of God: which hath brought this abomination and subversion of all godly doctrine into the church of Christ.

The third preparative is obedience both unto God and man. It were as good never to read the Scrip-

ture, nor to hear sermon, in case we mind not to obey the word of God spoken or read. Therefore doth Moses upbraid and reprehend the Israelites (Deut. i. 26), when they knew the land to be good by the fruit that the twelve princes brought unto them, that they would not proceed forth in their journey to possess the land, but murmured against God ; wherefore they perished in the desert.

Therefore we must bring with us unto the reading of the word of God obedience, and be ready to do every thing it commandeth, though it seem never so difficult. As Abraham did in leaving his country (Gen. xii. 1), and offering his son (Gen. xxii. 2), and as Christ commandeth all that will be his disciples (Matt. x. 37. Luke, xiv. 26). The thing that God commandeth must be obeyed, what danger soever happen ; yea, if it be the loss of our life. (Luke, ix. 23. Matt. xvi. 25.) As also the commandment of the superior powers, from which no man should detract, neither deny his obedience thereto, because he is a Christian (1 Pet. ii. 13. Rom. xiii.), not only with eye-service, but from the heart (Eph. vi. 6. Col. iii. 22), sustaining not only such charges as the necessities of the commonwealth shall require, but also with life to defend the same, not fearing how strong an enemy is against him, nor how many ; but rather considering how strong God is, who hath promised to preserve every man's right, and given commandment that no man should do the other wrong. (Deut. v. 17, &c.) " Commit not theft." Again, " Honour thy father." The which commandment requireth obedience to all superior powers. Only obey the word of God, whatsoever shall happen unto man in his godly vocation, as Moses commanded (Deut. xx. 1). If thou see horsemen and chariots more than thou hast, fear not ; God is

with thee, as we have example in Abraham, Gideon, Jehosaphat, and others.

The fourth preparative is, that they should observe the common laws used among all people, which is called *jus gentium*; that they should peaceably pass by the possessions of the children of Esau, the Mount Seir, and likewise by the Moabites, not to molest them, nor their goods, but buy such things as they wanted for money, till they passed their limits and bounds; the which law bound them not to spoil, rot, and burn wheresoever they came, as well their friends as their foes, as it is too much used in our time amongst Christians, that say, "Laws be dispensed with in the time of war." Contrary unto this devilish opinion, God requires them to pass as true men, and not as thieves; as those who were obedient unto all honesty and godly laws, and not as exempt and privileged persons from all virtue and godliness.

The fifth preparative is, that they should esteem this doctrine of the commandments as it was worthy and declare the estimation thereof with many reasons: the first, of the utility and profit that it bringeth. This is your wisdom and prudence before the people (Deut. iv. 6), this is the only doctrine and law that teacheth how to live well, and to avoid the displeasure both of God and man, and leadeth to eternal felicity. "What other people is there of the world," saith Moses (Deut. iv. 7), "that hath their gods as present as our Lord God, as many time as we invoke and call upon him?" This doctrine was given from heaven, and the author thereof is God. It is a doctrine always to be learned and observed, not in paper or parchment, but in the heart of man, and daily to be taught unto the world, as the manner of giving it declareth. Unto all the

ople it was preached, not in an obscure or dark
ce, 'but in the mount (Exod. xix. 17), clearly and
only, that no man should doubt of it, as though
came out of Trophonius's cave, St. Patrick's pur-
tory, or the privy chamber of the bishop of Rome.
th the law and the lawgiver were known of all
e people. Minos was familiar with Jupiter, as the
ets feign. Numa had communication with *Ægeria*
e goddess, but no man was record thereof. He
ight therefore feign what he list, as many super-
itious hypocrites have done.

There appeared unto Gregory a child in the bread
f the altar ; the which vision, if it were true, was
evilish, and wrought by the devil to deceive the
eople of God. Bridget saw likewise in her con-
templations wonders. The bishops in their decretals
e likewise marvels and mysteries, that no man else
an see, except he be sworn to renounce God's laws :
or they teach one faith, and the Gospel another :
ey, one kind of good works, and Christ another.

This law is of another sort and perfection, openly
manifested by God, not unto one prince or learned
an, not unto twelve or seventy heads and principals
mong the people, but unto all the whole congrega-
tion, and not suddenly, but with great delibera-
on and preparation of the people for the space of
ree days. (Exod. xix. 15.) This law therefore Moses
ould the people to esteem as a thing of all things
ost to be esteemed ; as they do not at all, that say,
e Scripture containeth not all necessary doctrine
or the health of man, but needeth man's decrees.

The sixth preparative is, a true and right under-
standing of the law ; not to constrain the letter
gainst the mind of the text, but to behold always
the consent of the Scripture, and to do no wrong
unto the Author thereof.

Some men call this a dispensation of the law, when

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ie extremity thereof cannot with justice and equity be executed against the transgressors : as where Moses (Deut. iv. 41) appointeth certain cities to be asrefuges and sanctuaries for them that by chance or against their will should happen to kill any man. The law is, that whosoever sheddeth the blood of man, shall satisfy the law with his blood again (Gen. ix. 6.)

This law extendeth not as far as the words sound but as far as the mind of the letter permitteth : that is to say, unto such as of hatred, rash and wilful madness, or to satisfy an evil and undigested passion (that hateth his neighbour), killeth his neighbour ; such condemn God in the superior powers, who should punish the evil doer, and not the injured persons themselves. These and such-like should suffer death again, and not such as kill against their will. Thus doth the Scripture of God interpret itself, and sheweth how every law should be understood : the which is a very necessary rule and precept to be always observed every where, lest the vigour and force of the letter should do injury unto the circumstance of the text. Therefore I would that every man in the reading of the Scripture should mark two things in every doubtful text.

First, the consent of other places : then, the allegory of the letter. As for example, this proposition : " This is my body." First, look at the other places of the Scripture, what Christ's body is, what qualities it hath : how it was conceived and born and whither it is ascended. Then thou shalt by consent of other places be constrained to understand these words according to the analogy or proportion of faith, and not after the letter. Then consider by the Scripture, why Christ by an allegory the bread his body, and the wine his blood. it shall be easy to understand, that they be

confirmations of our faith, than the body itself: sacraments and memorials of the things past, and not the thing they represent and signify. (Rom. iv. 11.)

The seventh preparative is, to add nothing unto the law, neither to take any thing from it. Who can be a convenient disciple of God and his doctrine, that believeth not all things and every thing necessary for the salvation of man to be contained openly and plainly in the Scripture canonical? Or how can he be a Christian man, who believeth one commandment of God and not another? He that said, "Thou shalt have but one God," saith likewise, "Thou shalt neither add nor take any thing from the Scripture" (Deut. iv. 2), but shalt observe it as it is given. So said Christ (Matt. xxviii. 20), so saith St. John (xvi. 24), so likewise, in the Revelations of Jesus Christ our Redeemer (Rev. xxii. 18). What is more necessary for him, that will read the Scripture or hear it preached, than this preparative?

First, be persuaded that all verity and necessary doctrine for our salvation is contained therein, and that the holy church of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, believed, preached, and died for the same, and in the same doctrine. If thy heart be not thus prepared, but judgest that God's law containeth one part of such doctrine as is necessary for man's salvation, and the bishops' laws another part, thou connectest and dishonourest the whole law and the giver thereof, and offendest the commandment given in Deuteronomy (i. 2. and xii. 32), and in Proverbs (xxx. 5, 6). Read diligently those places. Further, remember that this opinion is so ungodly, that the whole Scripture endeth with this sentence, "If any man add unto the word of God, God will put upon him all the maledictions contained in the book. And if any man diminish any thing of this prophecy, God will take from him such part as he hath in the book of life." (Rev. xxii. 18, 19.)

CHAPTER IV.

The first Table.

I am the Lord thy God that brought thee out of Egypt from the house of servitude; thou shalt have no strange gods before me.

This precept or commandment hath two members. The first requireth, that we accept, account, and take the God, that made and preserveth all things, the God, *Shadai*, omnipotent, and sufficient, not only to be God, but also to be our God, who helpeth us, succoureth us, saveth us, and only defendeth us. The second part forbiddeth all false gods.

This first part is the ground, original, and foundation, of all virtue, godly laws; or Christian works. And where this precept and commandment is not first laid and taken, as the only well wherefrom spring all other virtues; whatsoever be done, seem it never so glorious and holy unto the world, it is nothing, but very superstition and hypocrisy, as Paul saith. (Rom. xiv. Heb. xi.)

What putteth difference between the death of Socrates and Esaias, Diogenes and Jeremiah, Sophocles and Zacharias, Euripides and Stephen, Homer and St. John the Baptist, saving only the knowledge and confidence in this commandment, "I am the Lord thy God?" What difference was there between the church of the Pharisees, Scribes, and hypocrites, and the church of God, were it not the knowledge of this commandment that containeth two most necessary things, the true knowledge of God and the true honour of God? The which foundation and ground of our religion both the Testaments every where do teach: so also doth the image of God in our soul. Though we be born in servitude of sin, and blind unto all godliness, such a sparkle and dim light notwith-

standing remaineth in the soul, that our own conscience crieth out against us, when we utterly condemn the reverence and divine majesty of God. As it appeareth by the horrible and fearful deaths of such as thought it more easy to destroy their own living bodies, than to endure the conflict and dolours of their own conscience with the judgment and contempt of God's laws, as it is to be seen, leaving profane examples apart, in Saul (1 Sam. xxxi. 4), and Judas (Matt. xxvii. 5), with all other such in our time, that are the causes of their own death.

The subtilty of the devil must be taken heed of therefore and known betimes, lest he shew us God in another form, than he sheweth himself in his word; and this commandment, where he saith, that he is our God, it is as much as to say, he is as well ready to punish us if we condemn him, as to help us if we love him. The devil goeth about another thing, and would all men, as long as they have a purpose and bent will to sin, think that God is a merciful God, a gentle, sweet, and loving God, that winketh and will not see the abomination and accustomed doing of ill. But when the conscience feeleth the displeasure of God, and seeketh redress, he amplifieth and exaggerateth the greatness of sin, sheweth it as foul and as horrible, as it is indeed, and more extenuateth the mercy of God, maketh him then so cruel and an unmerciful tyrant, as if it were as impossible to obtain mercy of him, as to suck water out of the dry pump or a burning coal.

Wherefore seeing his majesty is invisible, and cannot be known of mortal man, as he is; and likewise because man giveth little credit, or none at all, unto his blessed word, he presenteth all his works, heaven and earth, unto man, to be testimonies and witnesses of his great power: that man, seeing those creatures and the wonderful preservation of the same,

might think upon God, the maker of all things, and thank him with all his heart, for that he would say these words unto him, a vile creature and worm's meat : " I am the Lord thy God." By his works he shewed himself thus unto Adam (Gen. ii. 25), and unto the natural philosopher (Rom. i. 20), also unto every reasonable man (Deut. xxx. 19). Howbeit, so far hath the devil blinded many (would to God, only the infidels and not such as be accounted Christians), that they take as much knowledge of God by the contemplation of his works, as Midas the king by the contemplation of his gold.

Wherefore, seeing we believe with such difficulty this word of God, " I am the Lord thy God," and the devil hath blindfolded and darkened our sight, and so bewitched our senses, that we neither hear nor see any thing unto the glory of God and salvation of our souls ; he addeth yet other testimonies to ascertain us that he is our God, and leaveth nothing undone, that might draw us unto a firm and constant belief in him ; setting before our eyes the glorious and wonderful deliverance and defence of the people, when he brought them out of Egypt. Such testimonies added he unto his word to establish our faith always. As to Adam and Abel, when the fire from heaven burned their sacrifice, so unto us, unto whom he hath given for the confirmation thereof his dear Son Jesus Christ, born, dead, and resuscitated from death, to shew to us himself, and to teach us that he is our God to save us from the servitude of hell and sin, and to help us as many times as we call unto him in Christ's name. For only in him we come to that knowledge of God that he will be our God.

Though the Jew and Turk know there is but one God, and after their religion would honour him, yet doubt they whether he taketh care of them, will hear

their petitions, will be honoured of them, and how he will be honoured. For they have not the word of God, as Christ gave it, but as they falsely interpret it, unto the contumely and dishonour of Christ. But we know him to be our God, as this commandment saith in Christ Jesus (John, i. 18). When we have a true knowledge of him by his word, we must give him the same honour that his commandment requireth, that is to say, obedience and fear, faith and love. Repeat the words again of the commandment, and mark them: "I am the Lord thy God." If he be Lord, then hath he power over body and soul; obey him therefore, lest he destroy them both. Thy God: if he be God, all things be in his power, and he hath sufficient both for thee and others, and will give it thee because he is thy God. He needeth for himself neither heaven, nor earth, nor any thing that is therein; and to put thee out of doubt thereof, he brought not only the people out of Egypt to warrant his promise, but also sent his only Son to die for thy sake, that he might be thine, and thou his.

The effect now of this part of the commandment is to declare and bring man to a knowledge of God, as ye see. And he, being once known by his word, requireth also man's duty to honour him in true and perfect religion, the which consisteth in fear, faith, and love. The which three points Moses diligently and at large declareth in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th chapters of Deuteronomy, and doth nothing else in all of them but expound this first commandment. I will shew partly how, and then you may read the places, and learn more by thyself.

In the beginning of the sixth chapter he sheweth wherefore thou shouldest fear him, and keep his commandments, saying, "It shall be to thy profit." This is the manner of all men who would have

any thing done : first, to shew what profit followeth the doing of it, that the commodity might excite the mind and study of him who should do it. Moses saith, " It shall be well with thee, God will multiply thy seed, and give thee a land flowing with milk and honey." Now, if thou fear the Lord God, this shall be thy reward, and the same self promise thou shalt find many times annexed with the fear of God, before thou come to the end of the 11th chapter. All health and joy followeth the fear of God. Mark those words well, and print them in thy heart, fear for no ill nor sickness, contagious air or disease, so thou have this medicine of God's fear in thy soul, which preserveth health, and expelleth all diseases.

Galen hath written books *De tuenda Sanitate*, that is to say, to preserve health : so hath Hippocrates, Cornelius Celsus, and others. They prescribe these six things to be observed of as many as would live in good health : 1. The temperature and condition of the air. 2. Moderate use of meat and drink. 3. Motion and exercise of the body, and rest of the same. 4. Sleep and watching, as the complexion by nature shall in time convenient require. 5. Fullness and emptiness of the body. 6. Perturbations and passions of the mind. For many have died through such passions of the mind with sudden sorrow, as P. Rutilius and M. Lepidus : some with sudden joy, as the noble woman Polycrata, as Aristotle writeth. So died Diagoras and others, as ye may read in other places. Some died for shame, as Diodorus, Homer, Valerius. The physicians promise health, if these six rules be observed. But God saith, all these be in vain without the fear of him. (Deut. xxvii. 28, 30.) There see the word of God. And look in the second book of Samuel, chap. xxiv. how it was proved true, where the pestilence infected the whole land of Canaan, from the city of Dan unto

city of Beersheba, in three days, so that there
 had seventy thousand men in that short space.

In the end of the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy,
 Moses exhorteth the people to fear God, to avoid
 the punishment that followeth the contempt of God's
 commandment: and this is the most apt and best
 way to persuade people, who care for no virtue, nor
 will be moved with any promise or reward that follow-
 eth well doing. "I am a jealous God, and the
 Lord thy God is in the midst of thee." Which words
 declare that when people will not obey his command-
 ments, and receive his love and favour, he waxeth
 angry, and useth the extreme remedy, the scourge
 of adversity, that whosoever will not willingly by fair
 means be brought, by force shall be constrained to
 ask; for nothing can resist when he will punish.

The first point therefore of religion is the fear of
 God.

The second is faith and confidence in his word.
 Therefore Moses saith, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord
 our God is one God; in this one God thou shalt put
 thy trust, and believe."

To persuade this faith into their hearts, Moses did
 not only the deliverance out of Egypt before their
 eyes, but also that out of the seven most mighty
 cities of the world. And in the same chapter he re-
 peateth and inculcateth into their ears this religion and
 faith, saying, "Know thou that the Lord thy God, he
 is the only and true God," and so forth. (Deut. xvii.

Then read unto the end of the 11th chapter,
 how busy and diligent Moses is in heaping argument
 upon argument to persuade the people to believe God
 by his word, and to establish this commandment,
 to root it in their and our hearts. All the works of
 God, heaven and earth, all the miracles wrought in

Old Testament and in the New, were done to
 give unto mortal man this precept to be true: "I

am the Lord thy God," and by none other thing but interpretation of this cominmandment to establish the verity of this word.

The third is love ; wherefore he saith, " Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy soul, and with all thy power." (Deut. vi. 5.) Moses in the end of the chapter sheweth wherefore this our God should be loved. " He will give you," saith he " the land that ye never deserved, freely for his promise sake." And in the seventh chapter (ver. 1) he promiseth to destroy a people more strong than they be. In the eighth chapter (ver. 3), he saith that he fed them in the wilderness with meat from heaven, which neither they, nor their fathers, ever knew. By these and many other reasons he provoked the people to this part of their religion, the love of God. In case any benefactor, or he that doeth good to another, is to be beloved, especially this our God is to be loved, saith Moses. We may likewise consider his benefits towards us, and so expel this detestable and horrible unkindness towards him ; as is the leaving unto us of the Scripture, whereby we know his blessed will through the grace of the Holy Ghost that leadeth us to knowledge, defendeth us from ill and preserveth us in virtue. The greatest argument of all is the birth and death of his only Son, given for our redemption.

Then doth Moses teach how we should love him (Deut. vi. 5), with all our heart, with all our soul and all our force. Of these parts consisteth man for the heart is the original of all affections and desires. When the law requireth the love of God with all the heart, it requireth all man's affections to be sincere and pure, and wholly directed unto the love and obedience of God. For he is a jealous God, he is not content with the fourth part, or the half part but requireth the whole heart, mind, will, affections

and life of man. He is not content that we love him with one part, and the world with the other.

These words forbid not, but that we may love our honest friends, parents, and others, as it is written (Exod. xx. 12), so that their love be in God and for God, not equal or above the love of God. If election happen, that in the loving of the one, there must follow the hatred of the other, thou art bound to hate thy father, thy friend, and also thine own life, for the love of God. (Matt. x. 39.) Last of all, thou must love him with all thy force : by the which words are understood all the powers both of body and soul, the senses interior and exterior, whatsoever they be, as the Holy Ghost hath given them ; so that neither the inward man nor the outward man be defiled by sin, as Paul saith. (1 Thess. v. 23.)

These words must be thought upon, that man apply the gift of the Holy Ghost aright to the glory of God, and profit of his church, whereof we be all members. One hath the gift of prophecy, to judge of things to come : another, of knowledge, to open the mysteries hidden in the Scripture : another, the gift to comfort and give consolation to the afflicted : another, the gift truly to dispense and distribute the goods of this world without fraud : another, the gift to persuade by the word of God people to amendment of life with the tongue : another, to do it with the pen : one, the gift to serve God in the ministry of the church : another, to serve God in the ministry of the commonwealth : the one, apt and strong, wise and prudent in affairs of war : the other, to keep good rule, and govern in peace : the one, apt to one thing, the other, to another. Every man, therefore, remember this commandment, " Love God with all thy force," and apply the gift that the Holy Ghost hath given thee, to the glory and service of God. It is an horrible sin before God, to abuse

his gifts, whether they be of the body or of the soul. (Matt. xxv. 42.)

Moses now, as thou seest, hath taught us to know God, and shewed us how to honour him in faith, fear, and love; and shewed many reasons, why we should give him this honour and obedience; so that the first part of the first commandment, "I am the Lord thy God," may be understood of every man, who is willing to know God and his own salvation. Before he expoundeth the second part of the commandment, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before me," he admonisheth the people of a very necessary doctrine, that is to say, how they should behave themselves in prosperity and wealth, and use the commodities of this world.

We know by experience and daily proof, that nothing more withdraweth man from the honour, love, and fear of God, than those two, felicity and adversity: as Christ our Saviour teacheth by the similitude of him that sowed, and part fell by the way side, part upon the stones, part among the thorns. (Matt. xiii. 1. Mark, iv. 1. Luke, viii. 5.) By the seed in the stony ground Christ understandeth such as leave his word for the calamities and afflictions of this world. By the seed among the thorns, such as hear the word of God, howbeit it bringeth forth no fruit by reason of the cares of this world and deceit of riches. Moses therefore sheweth, like a good prince and faithful preacher, what is to be done in both these states and conditions of life, in prosperity and adversity. So that, if this counsel be followed, there is neither prosperity nor adversity can withdraw man from the will and pleasure of God.

The first doctrine, to keep man from the displeasure of God in prosperity, is written in Deuteronomy (vi. 10), "When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land which he promised to thy fathers Abra-

ham, Isaac, and Jacob, and shall give thee the great cities and goodly, which thou never buildedst, houses furnished with all necessities, which thou replenishedst not, and water-pits that thou diggedst not, vines and olives that thou plantedst not, and thou eat and be satisfied, beware that thou forget not the Lord that brought thee out of Egypt from the house of servants."

Here thou seest what danger and peril is annexed with abundance and prosperous fortune in this world; and how common an ill it is, in a manner taking effect in all men, that possess the goods of this world, as Isaiah saith (xxii. 13), "Let us eat and drink, to-morrow we shall die." As Moses saith (Deut. xxxii. 15), "He that should have been upright, when he waxed fat, spurned with his heel: thou art gross, thou art fat, thou art laden with fatness, therefore he forsook God that made him, and regarded not the strong God of his salvation." And in Luke (xii. 19) the rich man said, "My soul, thou hast great riches, and shalt use them many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

By these examples thou seest that Moses prescribed not without cause this rule, how to use ourselves in prosperity. The which rule containeth two precepts, the one, to use moderately the gifts of God, and not to abuse them; the other, to acknowledge them to come from God, and to put no trust in them. The riches of the world abused engender pride and forgetfulness of God: therefore Moses admonisheth chiefly man in his wealth to beware he forget not God. And he sheweth the cause, why we should not glory nor trust in them, although they be most justly and right easily gotten. "God giveth them," saith he, "and they be not gotten with our labours and pains."

I know what men are wont to say, when they hear any of these new gospellers, that a rich man acknowledgeth not God for God, and yet confesseth him unto others, which every man, who is not out of his wits, may confess. And David saith not, "The fool saith with his *tongue*, there is no God:" but in the heart verily to acknowledge only God to be God; only to trust unto him, and not unto the creatures of the world, it is a rare thing in prosperity.

Few think, by how small a thread all the certainty of riches hangeth, and that suddenly they may perish. Then should man most suspect the fortune of this world, when she smileth most, because she is fickle and inconstant, as the poet Horace teacheth, when prosperity promiseth security and rest in the goods of this world. It is a hard thing, and rare verily, to think only God to be the giver thereof, and that he can suddenly take the things away that have been gathered with great pains and travail. Therefore he maketh many times of a rich man, a poor man; of one that ruleth all, one contemned of all; of Croesus, Irus; and so punisheth, because men follow not the precept and commandment of Moses, "Abuse not the gifts of God, and forget him not in the time of prosperity."

The other impediment, that leadeth us from this religion of God, fear, faith, and love, is adversity: whereof he speaketh thus (Deut. viii. 2): "God led thee forty years in the desert to punish thee and to tempt thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandment or not: therefore he punished thee, and suffered thee to hunger, fed thee from heaven with meat which thou knewest not, neither thy fathers knew, to declare unto thee that man liveth not by bread only, but by all things that proceed from the mouth of God liveth man."

When man is oppressed with adversities and trouble in this life, then come thoughts as thick as hail, whether God love him that is so punished. Then he disputeth why and what should be the cause of these troubles and adversity; then he revolveth, posseth, and turneth both the nature of God and man in his cogitations, knowing God to delight in doing well unto man, and that man of all creatures is the most excellent. He findeth God severe, and of all creatures man most miserable, and subject unto adversities; and that the more man applieth himself to the commandments of God, the more miseries of this world are heaped upon his head. It is not therefore without cause that Moses prescribeth a remedy, lest man should depart (being in the thrall and brake of adversity) from this religion, fear God, believe in God, and love God.

Moses would keep man in his obedience and office towards the law, in declaring the causes why God punisheth. He sheweth, that it is for no hatred that he punisheth, but for love; and that he findeth always in man just matter worthy of punishment. As Paul saith (Rom. v. 12), that "death by reason of sin entered into the world;" so that the integrity and perfectness of man's nature by sin is lost, and made like unto the nature of the brute beasts, fruits, and herbs of the field. (Job, xiv.) Therefore God, for sin being angry, punisheth the miserable nature of man, being spoiled of his original and first perfection, with many calamities. As David saith (Psa. xc. 7), "Thou being angry for sin, we are subject unto death." Read the whole Psalm, if thou canst. It is Moses' prayer, wherein is declared how brief and miserable the life of man is for sin.

Unto this natural corruption is annexed our wilful malice and contempt of God, as we see in Cain and Esau, likewise in this people of Israel, who were

diligently instructed and godlily brought up by Adam, Isaac, and Moses : yea in ourselves, who daily read and hear the word of God, yet are nothing the better. Therefore Moses saith, that " God led them in the wilderness to punish their sin," which is the principal cause of all calamities. Then punisheth he, to prove such as be is, whether they will persevere in his commandment or not. Thus tempted he Abraham and Jacob for the space of all their lives, and he layeth more adversities many times upon such as be of his true church, than upon others.

As these examples declare, Manasses the tyrant cut Isaiah the Prophet asunder with a saw ; Apries killed Jeremiah ; the bishops, Zacharias ; Herod, John Baptist, with others. When such adversities happen, let no man depart from the true word of God, but say with Micah the Prophet (vii. 9), " I will sustain the punishment of God, for I have offended him : " and with Isaiah (lxiv. 8), " Behold, we have offended and long continued in sin, wherefore thou art angry." God, when he punisheth, worketh two good deeds at one time.

He correcteth sin, and calleth the sinner unto penance, as we have examples in David, Josiah, and Manasseh. And St. Paul saith (1 Cor. ii. 32), " We are punished of the Lord, lest we be damned with the world." If thou be a good man and yet punished, rejoyce : for thy punishment is a testimony of the doctrine and religion that thou professest : and thou hast many fellows, the Patriarchs, Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, who would rather suffer death than deny the profession of the Gospel.

There be many other causes why God punisheth, and why the punishment should be patiently taken ; it were a book-matter to rehearse them. I will only speak of one cause more that Moses writeth in the same place (Deut. viii. 3), and pass over the rest.

God made them hungry, and fed them with meat from heaven, that they should know man lived not only by bread, but of all things that proceed from the mouth of God. Some men understand, that Moses meaneth that the body liveth with bread corporal, and the soul with the word of God; seeing that man consisteth of those two parts, the body and the soul. It is true, and a good interpretation; howbeit, if these words be referred only to the body in this place of Moses, it shall be consonant with the circumstance of the text, and declare his purpose the better. Though man put meat into his body, which he judgeth of his own nature to nourish, yet except the favour and grace of God digest and dispose it into every member of the body, it nourisheth not. As we see many men who eat much and many times in the day, who are yet nothing the stronger. The physicians call this disease, *aepsian*, *cruditem*, when there is no digestion at all: sometimes, *dyspepsian*, *depravatam concoctionem*, when the meat is turned into a contrary quality: sometimes, *aura dyspepsian*, *tardam concoctionem*, when the stomach digesteth with difficulty and long protraction of time.

This I speak only to this purpose, that neither meat, neither medicine, neither physician avail, except God say, Amen. If thou wilt take profit of the thing thou eatest, follow the physic of Paul, speaking of the meat (1 Tim. iv. 5): "It is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." It is not only lawful for thee to eat it, but also God will give nourishment. That the meat and drink feed not the body without the favour and blessing of God, it is declared, where it is said, "Ye shall eat, and yet not be satisfied." This doth Christ's answer unto the devil prove (Mark, iv. 4), when he hungered in the body, and not in the soul, therefore his answer

must be referred only to the body. God's punishment therefore taught the Israelites this doctrine, that God giveth not only meat, but also virtue thereunto to nourish him who eateth. Seeing now that the Israelites by adversity were brought unto the knowledge of their sin, and instructed with this further doctrine, that God giveth as well virtue unto the meat to nourish him that eateth, as the meat itself; there is no occasion that they should therefore leave God, but rather accept the punishment with thanks, as a good schoolmaster sent to teach them their health and the will of God. As David saith (Psa. cxix. 71), "It availeth me greatly that I am punished, to learn thy commandments."

The first part of the first commandment containeth, as thou seest by the interpretation of Moses, the founttain and original of all true religion; and is as the foundation and root, from whence spring all the other commandments, and are comprehended in these four words, 1. knowledge of God; 2. fear of God; 3. faith in God; 4; and love of God.

Further, in the interpretation of the same he hath taught his people and us how to use ourselves in prosperity and adversity. For each of them draweth man from the four virtues afore rehearsed, except the mind of man be fully persuaded by the word of God, how a mean and godly moderation may be kept, when man hath abundance, and how, to whom, and when to use liberality and dispensation of his goods. Likewise, how man should with patience sustain the hand of God in adversity for the time of this present life, which Job describeth (xiv. 10) to be nothing but a vanity by these words; "Man born of a woman liveth but a few days, and is replenished with all affliction; springeth and withereth all away as a flower; flieth as a shadow, and cannot long en-

dure." If thou read the book that wise Solomon wrote of the contempt or vanity of the world, called Ecclesiastes, thou shalt not only learn what the world and man is, but also take adversities in the better part, if thou follow his counsel. The book containeth but twelve chapters: read and mark every month one, then at the year's end thou shalt read it over.

If thou put the riches thereof into thy head, think thou hast gained well that year, though by the punishment of God thou hast lost otherwise all thy goods in the world, unto thy shirt.

Now followeth the second part of the first commandment.

Thou shalt have no strange gods before my face.

This part of the commandment removeth all false religion and superstition, wherewithal the glory and majesty of God might happen to be diminished or darkened in the soul of man; which chanceth as many times as man attributeth unto any creature the thing that is due only unto God; or when we would honour God, or do any thing acceptable unto him, as we feign of our own brains, and not as his word teacheth. This honour we owe only God, faith, love, fear, and prayer. Now to attribute any of these to any creature is idolatry, and to have false gods before his face. Only God should be our hope, faith, love, and fear, and him only should we pray unto. (Isa. viii. 13.)

To pray or trust in any dead saint departed out of this world is idolatry against this commandment: and they that do it have neither commandment nor example in the Scripture to approve their doing. Such as fear the menaces and threatenings of the devil and of the devilish people, who wish the subversion of God's holy word and the persecution of such as

follow it, and believe not that God hath power to keep them under, and will do so for his word's sake, have false gods before their faces, for he only is to be feared. (Matt. iv. 10. Psal. x. 31. Isa. li. 7.)

Such as be given to astrology, or others, who superstitiously observe the course and revolution of the heavens, and think they can do good or harm, give good fortune or ill, as they think and judge; that elevate the figure of heaven to judge what shall follow them, when they perceive by their nativities under what sign they were born, offend against this commandment. The which abomination hath not only been used before our time by superstitious persons, but also now-a-days by them, who have not a right knowledge of God.

Such as give over-much faith unto medicines, or the nature of stones and herbs (2 Chron. xvi. 12), commit idolatry.

Such as give faith unto the conjuration or sorcery of superstitious persons; as to priests, who bless water, wax, bones, bread, ashes, candles; or others to witches or soothsayers, where they abuse the name of God to singe out the fire of him who hath burned his hand, to stanch blood, to heal man or beast; or to such as by destiny will shew what shall happen unto man, and what plenty shall follow of grain or fruit in the earth, health, or sickness in the air, commit idolatry. (Levit. xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 10, 11.)

I speak not against the knowledge that man seeketh for, whether it be in heaven or in the earth, so that they extend their study to this end, to glorify God in his works, and not to make his works God. Well we be assured by the Scripture, and also by those who knew not the Scripture, that no constellation of heaven, intemperance of the air, water, or earth, can hurt him who seareth God; as the testi-

monies of the Scripture declare. Only the disobedience of man towards God maketh man subject to those diseases and sicknesses that man is troubled with. Read the Psalm that beginneth, "Whoso dwelleth in the secret of the Highest shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty." In which Psalm is shewed how sure and free from all ill and diseases he is, that putteth his trust in God; and that neither heaven nor earth, nor any thing that is in them, shall molest him. Read and see.

Cicero mocketh these blind conjectures and foredestinies, asking in derision of those soothsayers, how it happened that Jupiter commanded the crow to sing at the left hand, and the raven at the right hand.

Isaiah (xxx. 2. and xxxi. 1) sheweth another kind of idolatry, which was used and furnished in our fathers: and likewise daily we see with our eyes the same confidence and trust in the power of the flesh, when such as be in league and confederacy together too much trust in their own strength and power. Read those two chapters how the Israelites entered league with the Egyptians, and what was their end, and confer the same into our time. What cities, what princes, and what strength, after the judgment of this world, were united together! But because God was out of the league, see the end, how it availed nothing. To the same confusion shall at length come all kings and kingdoms that trust more in their riches, munitions, and confederacy with men, than in God.

There is forbidden in this part of the commandment, that any man should give thanks for any thing received in this world to any other saving to God. Therefore Hosea the Prophet calleth the synagogue of the Jews, a whore, because she attributeth the gifts she received of God unto her false

gods. The same teacheth Isaiah, lvii. 9. This idolatry is at large written in Jeremiah, ii. Read the chapter, and confer it with our time, that parteth the thanks and praises, that only should be given unto God, with the saints departed out of this world. Every man, as his superstition leadeth him, commendeth his riches to God and St. Erasmus; his ox to God and St. Luke; his horse to God and St. Loie; for every disease he hath a diverse patron, and honoureth him with the prayer that only should be said unto God Almighty in the name of Christ.

This idolatry hath in a manner infected all the Latin church. The nature of this secret and pernicious ill must be by the word of God well marked, lest under the cloak and shadow of true religion it deceive men out of the truth. For this idolatry saith and beareth men in hand, that she doth not so desire help of saints, or thank them for the benefits received, as though she neglected or offended the high and only God: but granteth and confesseth God to be the chief giver of all things; howbeit not only for his mercies sake and the merits of Christ his only Son our Saviour, but also at the intercession and prayers of the dead saints. Thus craftily and under a pretence of true religion doth she sunder and divide the glory and the honour due only unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with the saints in heaven, that know nothing of our condition and state in this world. (Isa. lxiii. 16.)

By this means our elders both the Jews and the gentiles mingled the rabble and multitude of gods with the only God and Maker of all things; not that they thought the idols or images to be God: but thought that by that way God would be honoured. The which is very idolatry: for the law saith, "Thou shalt not do the thing that seemeth good in thine eye, but the thing I have commanded thee to do."

Therefore to avoid all false religion and superstition of the mind and inward man, God saith, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before me." The conscience therefore must be pure and clean from all private and secret thoughts of idolatry, apostacy, or defection, if we would that God should approve our religion to be true. Every thing that we do for the honour of God, not commanded by his word, is strange and not acceptable to God: as all good intentions, feigned works by man, and all things commanded by general councils not expressed in the word of God, by the Patriarchs, Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, which be and ever were before God the holy and catholic church, and shew us that whosoever doth add any thing to their laws are the church of antichrist. (Deut. iv. 2. and xii. 13. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.) So called God the fire of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, a strange fire, that is to say, such as he commanded not. God will have none other works of man, than he requireth in his express word.

He condemneth by this law the wicked sacrifice and idolatry committed in the private masses, wherein people do not only take from God and Christ their due honour, but also make another god of bread, which is no more the living God, than the golden calf of the Israelites; as not only the Scripture, but also the reason of man and the senses of all brute beasts of the field, ox and sheep, with all others the birds of the air and fishes of the water, do bear record.

This unspeakable and most abominable ill is taken for the principal article and chief pillar of the true and apostolical church by such as believe not the Apostles' writings. But how can it be the apostolical church, when it repugneth and is clean contrary to the Apostles' writings; likewise contrary to the testa-

ment, will, and institution of Christ Jesu, our only Saviour, the author and first giver of this blessed sacrament of his most honourable and precious blood in his church? If it be not lawful to change man's testament, nor to add or take any thing from it, but to execute and do every thing, as it is there expressed, and none otherwise, much more no man should take upon him to change the testament of Christ.

Oh that people, for whom Christ hath shed his most innocent blood, would understand and perceive this sensible and manifest abomination, while they believe these seducers and deceivers of Christian souls, who have not as much as one iota or prick of the Scripture to help themselves withal! Read, read, I beseech thee, Christian reader, Matthew the sixth and twentieth, Mark the fourteenth, Luke the two-and-twentieth, and see how far their abominable mass is from the word of God. And think who was the priest that ministered this sacrament, and what people received it: then shalt thou find the Son of God, the Wisdom of the Father, the Light of the world, the Lamb that died for thy salvation, to be minister of this holy sacrament, and the church or people who received it to be the elect and chosen Apostles, Christ's friends, that taught the Gospel in all the world, and died for the same as witnesses of the truth. Then doubt not but thou wilt perceive this idolatry, except (which God forbid) thou doubt, whether Christ and the Apostles be the true, old, and catholic church or not.

They that defend this idolatry deceive thee with lies and false feigned laws out of their own heads, and not taken out of the Scripture. Believe Christ and his word, which sheweth the truth only, and then thou canst not err any more than Christ himself erreth, neither be damned; except Christ, all the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles be damned with thee. These deceivers make thee believe that the holy sacra-

ment, used as a communion under both kinds, is a new and late invented doctrine by man. Thou shalt find the contrary in the word of God, that it is a thousand five hundred and odd years old, and that Christ and his Apostles so used it. Let those be thy fathers, and follow thou their faith, and let the rest go. Such as teach contrary doctrine be likewise the followers of the apostles and disciples, but not of Peter nor Stephen, but of Judas, as St. Bernard saith of the Pope, who hath been the chief doer in the defacing of God's holy word and in planting of this idolatry.

Such as trust in adversity to be helped by any saint, and not only by God in Christ, make them strange gods, as they do who call upon the saints departed in the time of war; as in time past the Englishman upon St. George, the Frenchman upon St. Denis, the Scot upon St. Andrew; which is nothing else but a very gentile and ethnic custom: as though their private gods and singular patrons could give the victory and upper hand in the field, or St. George favour him whom St. Andrew hateth. What thing is this else but to set two souls at debate, as the gentiles did their gods Juno and Minerva with Venus? What is there between the Greeks who trusted in Juno and Neptune, and the Englishman who trusted in St. George; or between the Trojans who trusted in Venus and her friends, and the Scots, who trust in St. Andrew, if they hope by his help their wars shall prosper?

But, praised be the mercy of God, I hear say and believe it, that Englishmen have resigned St. George's usurped title to the living God, the God of battle. No good man will take me as though I meant that Juno, Pallas, or Venus, were as good as St. Andrew, or the saints that be in glory for ever with God. But I say that these superstitious persons, who make

their patrons or singular helpers of the saints, differ nothing in this point from the heathen or gentile: for as the one honoureth he knoweth not what, so doth the other: both following their own imagination and superstition without testimony and commandment of the Scripture. Read the commentaries of Thomas Valois on St. Austin *De Civitate Dei*, and they will tell thee, if thou believe not the Scripture, what superstition is: where be these words; "Superstition is a superfluous religion, what way soever it be superfluous; whether it be of the superfluity of the things honoured, or of the things used for religion, or of the manner in religion. This doubtless is understood by the name of superstition, from whence soever the name hath its beginning: whatsoever thou do to please the Almighty, if it be not commanded in his word, it is superfluous superstition."

Remember therefore this part of the commandment, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before my face:" and honour God, save thy soul, avoid idolatry, as his only word teacheth, and beware of man's laws.

CHAPTER V.

The Second Commandment.

Thou shalt make thee no image, or any similitude of things in heaven above, in earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not worship nor honour them: for I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God, punishing the iniquity of the fathers in the children that hate me, in the third and fourth generation.

In the first commandment we learned that God is the only and sole God, and that we should not think nor feign any other besides him. Further, that commandment expresseth, what this our own God is,

and how affectionated or minded to us, full of mercy, and ready always to succour and aid both soul and body in all affliction. It sheweth us further, how we should honour and reverence this, our almighty and merciful God; so that the end and whole sum of the first commandment is, that only God would be known of his people to be God and honoured as God. So doth God first instruct the mind and soul of man, before he requireth any outward work or external reverence, or else altogether it were hypocrisy, whatsoever show or perfection it seemeth to have in the eye of the world. He layeth therefore the first commandment, as a foundation of all true religion, as the original and spring of all virtue, and openeth the well and fountain of all mischief and abomination in these words, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before my face." This second precept and two others, that follow in the first table, teach us how to honour God in external religion or outward works, and to shew the fear, faith, and love, that we bear unto God in our hearts unto the world.

Two of these last commandments shew what we should do, and the third which I now expound, what we should not do. The purpose, end, and will of this second commandment is, that God's pleasure is unto us, that we should not profane or dishonour the true religion or honour of God with superstitious ceremonies or rites, not commanded by him. Wherefore, by this second commandment he calleth man from all gross and carnal opinions or judgments of God, the which the foolish and ignorant prudence and wit of man conceiveth, where it judgeth without the Scripture and forbiddeth external idolatry, as in the first it condemneth internal.

This commandment hath three parts. The first taketh from us all liberty and license, that we in no case represent or manifest the God invisible and in-

comprehensible with any figure or image; or represent him unto our senses, who cannot be comprehended by the wit of man or angel.

The second part forbiddeth to honour any image.

The third part sheweth us, that it is no need to represent God unto us by any image.

Moses giveth a reason for the first part, why no image should be made. (Deut. iv. 15.) "Remember," saith he to the people, "that the Lord spake to them in the vale of Horeb. Thou heardest a voice; but sawest no manner of similitude, but only a voice heardest thou." Isaiah diligently sheweth (xl. 18. xlv. 9, &c. xlv. 5) what an absurdity and indecent thing it is to profane the majesty of God incomprehensible with a little block or stone, a spirit with an image. The same doth Paul in the 17th of the Acts. The text therefore forbiddeth all manner of images; that are made to express or represent Almighty God.

The second part forbiddeth to honour any image made.

The first word, honour, signifieth to bow head, leg, knee, or any part of the body unto them, as all those do, who say, they may with good conscience be suffered in the church of Christ. To serve them is to do somewhat for their sakes, as to cense them with incense, to gild, to run on pilgrimage to them, to kneel or pray before them, to be more affectionate to one than the other, to set high lights before them, with such-like superstition and idolatry. God be praised, I may be short or write nothing at all in this matter, because such as I write unto, my countrymen, be persuaded already aright in this commandment.

The second part again sheweth us, how idolatry proceedeth and taketh place in men's consciences. The mind of man, when it is not illuminated with the Spirit of God, nor governed by the Scripture, it

imagineth and feigneth God to be like unto the imagination and conceit of his mind, and not as the Scripture teacheth. When this vanity or fond imagination is conceived in the mind, there followeth a further success of the ill. He purposeth to express by some figure or image God in the same form and similitude, that his imagination hath first printed in his mind; so that the mind conceiveth the idol, and afterward the hand maketh and representeth the same unto the senses.

Therefore God first forbiddeth this inward and spiritual idolatry of the mind, when he saith, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before my face." If the mind be corrupted, and not persuaded aright, then followeth the making of images, and afterward the honouring of them. The cause therefore of external idolatry is internal and inward ignorance of God and his word, as Lactantius writeth in his book of the Origin of Error. As it cannot be otherwise, but where the air is corrupted, there must follow pestilence and infection of the blood: so where the mind is not purely persuaded of God, must follow this gross and sensible idolatry, that would honour God in an idol.

The original cause why they are made, is, that man thinketh God would not be present to help him, except he be presented someways unto their carnal eyes; as the example of the Israelites declareth, who required Aaron to make them gods that might lead them in their journey. They knew right well, that there was but one God, whom they knew by the miracles that he wrought among them; but they thought he would not be present and at hand with them, except they might see him in some corporeal figure and image, and that the image might be a testimony of his presence. So we see, that no man falleth into this gross idolatry, but such as he first infected with a false opinion of God and his word,

then they say, they worship not the image, but the thing represented by the image. Against whom writeth St. Austin, that "images take away fear from men, and bring them into error. The ancient Romans more religiously (saith he) honoured their gods without images."

Seeing there is no commandment in either of the Testaments to have images, but, as you see, the contrary; and also the universal catholic and holy church never used images, as the writings of the Apostles and Prophets testify: it is but an ethnic vanity and gentile idolatry to say, that God and his saints be honoured in them, when all histories do testify, that in manner for the space of five hundred years after Christ's ascension, when the doctrine of the Gospel was most sincerely preached, no image was used. Would to God, the church was now as purely and well instructed, as it was before these avacious ministers and dumb doctors of the lay people were made preachers in the church of God! Read Austin, Epist. xlix. Therefore St. John biddeth us not only beware of honouring of images, but of the images themselves.

Thou shalt find the origin of images in no part of God's word, but only in the writings of the gentiles and infidels, or in such that more followed their own opinion and superstitious imaginations than the authority of God's word. Herodotus saith, that "the Egyptians were the first who made images to represent their gods." And as the gentiles fashioned their gods with what figures they lusted, so do the Christians. To declare God to be strong, they made him in the form of a lion; to be vigilant and diligent, in the form of a dog; and as Herodotus saith, the Mendesians formed their god Pan with a goat's face and goat's legs, and thought they did their god

great honour, because among them the herdmen of goats were had in most estimation.

So do they, who would be accounted Christians, paint God and his saints with such pictures as they imagine in their fantasies : God like an old man with a hoary head, as though his youth was past, who hath neither beginning nor ending : St. George, with a long spear upon a jolly hackney, who gave the dragon his death's wound (as the painters say) in the throat : St. White, with as many round cheeses as may be painted about his tabernacle. No difference at all between a Christian man and gentile in this idolatry, saving only the name. For they thought not their images to be God, but supposed their gods would be honoured that way, as the Christians do.

I write these things rather in contempt and hatred of this abominable idolatry, than to learn any Englishman the truth. For my belief and hope is, that every man in England knoweth, that praying to saints and kneeling before images is idolatry, and an instrument of the devil to lead men from the commandments of God. And for that they are appointed in many places to be as doctors to teach the people ; these doctors and doctrine the bishops and pastors shall bewail before the judgment-seat of God at the hour of death. And so likewise shall the princes of the world, whose office is daily to read and learn the Scripture, that they themselves might be able to judge the bishops' doctrine, and also see them apply the vocation they are called unto. It is not only a shame and an indecent thing for a prince to be ignorant, what curates his subjects have through all his realm ; but also a thing so contrary unto the word of God, that nothing provoketh more the ire of God against him and his realm, than such a contempt of God's commandment.

The third part declareth, that it is no need to shew

God unto us by images, and proveth the same with three reasons. First, "I am the Lord thy God," that loveth thee, helpeth thee, defendeth thee, is present with thee: believe and love me, so shalt thou have no need to seek me and my favourable presence in any image.

The second reason, "I am a jealous God," and cannot suffer thee to love any thing but in me and for me. When we two were married and knit together, for the love that I bare unto thee I gave thee certain rules and precepts how in all things thou mayst keep my love and good-will towards thee, and thou promisedst me obedience unto my commandments. (Exod. xix. 8.) So honour me and love me, as it standeth written in the writings and indentures written between us both. I cannot suffer to be otherwise honoured than I have taught in my tables and Testament.

The third reason is, that God revengeth the profanation of his divine majesty, if it be transcribed to any creature or image; and that not only in him that committeth the idolatry, but also in his posterity in the third and fourth generation, if they follow their father's idolatry, "as I give mercy unto the thousandth generation," when the children follow their father's virtue. Then to avoid the ire of God, and to obtain his favour, we must use no images to honour him withal. This ye may read (Isa. xxxix. 2), how king Hezekiah's sons lost their father's kingdom, and were carried into captivity for their father's sin. Read the 13th, 14th, and 15th of Deuteronomy, and see how Moses interpreteth this second commandment more at large.

God's laws expel and put images out of the church: then no man's law should bring them in. As for their doctrine which they teach the unlearned, it is a weak reason to stablish them withal. A man

may learn more of a living ape than of a dead image, if both should be brought into the school to teach.

CHAPTER VI.

The Third Commandment.

Thou shalt not use the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

The end of this precept is, that we always use reverently the name of God ; that is to say, the majesty and essence divine that consisteth in one divine nature and essence, and in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This most honourable, fearful, and blessed name no man should irreverently profane or temerarily without good advisement once think upon or speak of, but diligently take heed of these three things.

First, that whatsoever we think or speak be agreeable and consonant unto the excellency and holiness of his name, and extend to the setting forth of his glory. Secondly, that we abuse not his holy word, nor pervert the meaning and mysteries thereof to serve our avarice, ambition, or folly ; but as he hath opened himself and his will in his word so to know him, so to fear him, so to love him, so to serve him, so to instruct ourselves in faith, and so to teach others. Thirdly, that we reverently speak and judge of all his works without detraction or contumely, acknowledging his inscrutable prudence and justice in all things with laud and praise, as well in adversity as in prosperity.

They obey this commandment, and use the name of God aright, who preach Almighty God as he commanded in his word ; who pray unto him as it teacheth ; who give him thanks for adversity and prosperity, as it teacheth ; who confess him before the

done divers ways, as it shall appear in the numbering of certain daily used vices and horrible blasphemies, not only left unpunished, but also accounted as things commendable, and worthy of the praise of the most part of people.

The most horrible abuse of this holy and most fearful name is among such as think there is no God to reward virtue or to punish vice, as the Epicureans say: I would to God, the same blasphemy had corrupted none that bear the name of Christianity.

There were always in the church such, as it appeareth in Isaiah, xxii. 13. Luke, xii. 16, and be at this day a great number, who say, not flatly and plainly, "there is no God;" but by certain circumlocutions and periphrases, as well by words as by ill conversation of life, think there is no heaven or hell, and believe not so much the Scripture of God, as the words of him who knoweth neither God nor godliness.

The second sort who abuse this holy name of God be those, who under the pretence and name of God's word and his holy church seek their own glory and profit. As the Pope, under the title and pretence of God's minister, hath gotten to himself not only a bishopric, but also the whole monarchy in a manner of all Europe; a richer kingdom than any prince of the world; who never ceased from his beginning to move Christian princes to most cruel and bloody war, under the cloak and mantle of God's name. What means and craft hath he found to maintain this whorish and antichristian seat of abomination; idols, peregrinations, masses, dispensations, absolutions, defence of all things abominable; tyranny against virtue, establishment of his own laws, abrogation of God's laws, emptying of heaven, and filling of hell, blessing of things exterior, oil, bell, bread, water, with other things that be not by nature

cursed, and cursing of the souls whom Christ redeemed with his precious blood; with a thousand more such abominations, under the name and pretence of God and his holy church, the which neither the Patriarchs, neither the Prophets, Christ nor his Apostles, ever knew of, as both the Testaments do bear record.

The same do such as preach in the church of God their own imaginations and the decrees of men; for be their doctrine never so false, it hath a fair title and name of God's word, when it is but a subtle quiddity of Duns, a vain sophism of Aristotle, a superstitious decree of the bishops' laws, a copy of vain glory and crafty connexion of words, to satisfy the most part of the audience, and to flatter the richest; wresting and writhing the simple verity of God's words into as many forms and divers sentences, as be vain and carnal affections wrought in their ungodly hearts. So for the law of God, they preach the law of man; for the Gospel, judaical superstition; for Christ, themselves; which honour not God's name, as the law of the holy and catholic church of Christ teacheth, but dishonour and take it in vain, with the church of antichrist and the devil. For Christ bade his disciples preach none other than he himself commanded them (Matt. xxviii. 20); yea, he shewed that the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, should teach none other thing than by him was taught.

Therefore such as will occupy the office of a preacher, first must be well learned in the things that do appertain unto the Gospel, and be free from all such affections as rather seek to please himself and the world, than the furtherance of the doctrine he preacheth. It is not enough that he do preach the truth, but that he only have a respect unto the glory of Christ; then shall he boldly speak the truth without respect of persons, not tempering his oration

with colours of flattery, but will painly call virtue, virtue, and vice, vice, as he seeth occasion, whosoever be his audience. St. John in his Epistle, chap. iii. sheweth, who is apt for this office, to preach the word of God. So doth Christ (Matthew, x.). So doth Paul (1 Tim. iii. Titus, 1). So do Moses and the Prophets. Nothing more blasphemeth the name of God, than false doctrine, and such as seek themselves, and can use the word as they see their audience, and not as it is commanded them by the word of God. Such preachers have brought the superior powers of the earth unto a contempt of God's word and hatred of the preacher, when he telleth truth, and the unlearned into blindness and ignorance.

Those abuse the name of God, who seek help of damned spirits, or of such souls as be departed out of this world, as Saul did (1 Sam. xxviii. 7); or those who by necromancy or such-like enchantments abuse the name of God to resuscitate dead bodies, or call spirits departed unto the body again, which is nothing else but an illusion and craft of the devil to make men believe lies. Those men in English be called conjurers, who use arts forbidden by God's laws, and also by the laws of ethnics, before Christ was born. Titus Livius writeth of Numa Pompilius, who was instructed *disciplina tetrica*; the which discipline St. Austin calleth hydromancy or necromancy. The which arts were forbidden, as it doth appear by Apuleius, who in his book *De Magia* defendeth himself against one who did accuse him of necromancy. The law of the twelve tables, that were in Rome long before the birth of Christ, forbiddeth those arts, as Cicero writeth *De Repub.* The more I wonder that any such superstitious books should be printed under the privilege of any Christian prince or magistrate, as be the books of John Iritemius and Henry Cornelius Agrippa, especially his third book of secret philosophy, with

many others who spared no labour in setting forth such ungodly works.

They brought first the abuse of God's name into Christian men's hearts, and taught them the same superstition that once was among the Persians and Egyptians. For as amongst the gentiles there were some called augurs, who by observation of the birds of the air in their flying, crying, and eating, made men believe they knew things to come: so amongst the Christians be some, that think they can do the same. As if the pye chatter, they look for guests; if the crow cry, they shall have rain; if the owl howl, it is a sign of death, &c. As there were some, who by the observation of stars took upon them to speak of things to come by certain superstitious and devilish incantations, whom the Persians call Magi; the Greeks, Philosophi; the Latins, Sapientes; the French, Druidæ; the Egyptians, Sacerdotes; the Indians, Gymonosophistæ; the Assyrians, Chaldees. So are there amongst the Christians the same sort of people who are called soothsayers or prognosticators, who write and speak of things to come. As when Jupiter ruleth the constellations above, and is not impeached nor let by the conjunction of his contrary planet, we shall have a good year and a plentiful. If Saturn, and such as astronomers attribute contrary qualities unto, reign, we shall have scarcity and dearth of things.

Pliny writeth of such, as by words only or with some other thing annexed with the words, work things above nature, as the devil hath done always, as histories record. Valerius (lib. viii. cap. 1) writeth of one of the goddess Vesta's nuns, who was falsely accused of an unchaste life, and desired the goddess to deliver her innocence in that crime by some miracle, as she did. The maid went to the river called Tyber with a sieve, and brought it full of

water into the temple of the goddess. So among Christian men by the same sort of people, who by the abuse of God's name (through the help of the devil) do many times work the same in healing men; as not many years since I was borne in hand of a poor man who erred by ignorance, that this medicine could heal all diseases, *Jesus, Job, habuit, vermes, Job, patitur, vermes, in, nomine, Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen, lama sabacthani.* God opened his heart afterwards to know the truth.

Such as be given to the arts' practive, as geometry, music, astrology, and arithmetic, take upon them to judge of men's conditions by the sight of their faces. So be there among people christened that know neither art nor science, who take upon them to know the same by their countenance, the lines of their hands, or by their paces or going. Lucan the poet writeth, that one restored from death to life shewed to Sextus Pompeius what should be the success and end of the battle in the fields of Thessaly. So wrote Pliny and Tully. So did the shadow of Samuel shew the death of Saul. The same doth the devil shew unto many, that by the abuse of God's name use superstitious conjurations and enchantments, when they seek the truth of the devil and dead bodies, and leave the word of the living God.

Augustus, the emperor, forbade this superstition as art, and Claudius, the emperor, clean abolished it. How the law of Christian emperors hath forbidden and punished these ungodly arts thou mayst read (Cod. lib. ix. tit. 18). The law civil punishes it with banishment, with the sword, and the being torn with beasts. The fault is one, either to learn or teach things forbidden. Read the xviiith of Deut. ver. 10, and there thou shalt find as many names of those who use forbidden arts, as be rehearsed by Constantine and Julian the emperors (Cod. lib. ix.

tit. 18), and likewise the very same arts. And as Moses forbiddeth all the people those ungodly arts, so do those emperors. Both Moses in God's laws, and these emperors in man's laws, punish with death the transgressors of this commandment.

Moses (Deut. xiii. 5) prescribeth this punishment, that the "prophet or dreamer of dreams must be slain, because he hath spoken a defection or apostacy from the Lord your God." More at large is this punishment written in Leviticus (xx. 6), and Isaiah (xlvii. 12). In the law of man we read thus: "The superstition of fore-destining is forbidden always unto all men; and whosoever obeyeth not our commandments is condemned unto the sword, and shall suffer the loss of his head."

Though I do by the authority of God's laws and man's condemn this damnable art mathematical, I do not condemn such other arts and sciences, as be associated and annexed with this unlawful astrology. As for geometry and arithmetic, those be necessary for every man: especially arithmetic, for she extendeth, as a necessary aid, not only unto all sciences, but also unto every liberal art and condition of life. And among all arts mathematical, arithmetic is accounted the first: music, geometry, and astronomy want her aid, and she not theirs. They be the gifts of God, and are to be honoured, because they do come from him only, who giveth all goodness.

Further, the emperors of the world, Dioclesian, Maximianus, Tiberius (Cod. lib. ix. tit. 13), permit these arts. It is expedient or profitable to learn and exercise the art of geometry, but the damnable art mathematical is forbidden. The law meaneth astrology and astronomy, which are used well but of a few men. The astronomer is he that knoweth the course and motions of the heavens,

and teacheth the same, which is a virtue, if it pass not its bounds, and he become of an astronomer an astrologer, who taketh upon him to give judgment and censure of these motions and of the course of the heavens; what they prognosticate and destiny unto the creatures of the earth, man, beast, and others; what shall be the temperature of the air, the condition of the earth, the success of such fruit as it bringeth forth.

By this knowledge they forespeak of pestilence and other diseases, and see the death of great men to come, and such commotions and wars, as shall follow between the princes of the world. And thus they say, they know by the course of the heavens, when they see the conjunctions of many planets of rigorous and fatal disposition and quality concur, by reason of whose influence upon these inferior parts all those calamities must happen. Here they abuse not only the name of God and the natural discourse of reason, which hath comprehended the motions and course of the heavens, but also heaven itself; and they attribute unto the heavens the thing that only appertaineth to God: that is to say, the health of man and sickness of man, the plenty of the earth and scarcity of the same, the regiment of commonwealths, and the life and death of the governors thereof.

Their knowledge and practice in these things is nothing at all. For Almighty God hath not made the heavens to that end and purpose, that man should learn of them good fortune or ill. As it is plain (Gen. i.) that in the second day God made the firmament and the superior spheres to this end, that it should separate the waters that be under the firmament, from those that be above the firmament; and God called the firmament heaven. In the fourth day God made the sun, the moon, and the stars, and sheweth to what purpose he made them: the one

dominion in the day, the other in the night :
 I put them in the firmament of heaven to
 give light to the earth. They rule in the day and
 night, and put diversity between light and darkness ;
 divide the year into its parts, the spring, summer,
 autumn, and winter. They are signs likewise, saith
 the Lord, the which the husbandman, who tilleth and
 sows the ground, observeth without superstition,
 to know when to sow and reap his corn. He casteth it
 in autumn, and receiveth it again in the summer.
 Also the mariner mark the revolution of the
 moon, her decrease and increase, whereby he knoweth
 the tide's ebb and the flow of the sea.

Also the physicians, Avicen and Averrois, have
 assigned their use in man's body. Therefore
 the joint diversity of days in the practice of physic,
 to be more apt for letting of blood than
 to purge and to balm than others. If they
 be observed without superstition, it may be
 profitable. So notwithstanding that such, as observe
 these latter rules, may both minister and receive
 benefit ; for the heavens were made to serve us,
 not to master us ; were created for man, and
 not man for them. Therefore it is a false supersti-
 tion to say good or bad, plenty or scarcity, sickness
 or health, war or peace, depend on the influence of
 the stars : or he that is born under one sign to
 be better than he that is born under the other, as
 the Egyptian and ethnic foolishness beareth men
 witness. The prognostication of these blind pro-
 phets, good to be born in a man's bosom, to know
 the day of the month. The rest of their practice
 is without worth one hair.

In Deuteronomy, the xxviii. xxix. xxx. chapters,
 we see that all these evils, and many more than
 astrologers speak of, come unto us for sin and
 transgression of God's commandment. It is

neither sun nor moon, Jupiter nor Mars, that is the occasion or matter of wealth or woe, plenty or scarcity, of war or peace. Neither is the cause of pestilence the putrefaction of the air, as Galen writeth; but the contempt of God's commandment is the cause, as thou mayest read in the chapters of the Scripture a little before rehearsed: the air, the water, and the earth have no poison in themselves to hurt their lord and master, man. But man first poisoneth himself with sin, and then God useth these elements ordained for the life of man to be the occasion of his death.

Read the places and know, that good health is numbered among the blessings of God, and appertaineth unto those, that fear and keep God's commandments, and not to those that be destined to live long by the favour and respect of the planets. And the evil, of what kind soever it be, is the malediction of God against sin. The physicians say, that the chief remedy against pestilence is to flee from the place where the air is corrupt. God's law saith, "Flee whither thou wilt, the Lord shall make the pestilence cleave and associate with thee till it consume thee from the world." (Deut. xxviii. 21.) Again, in the same chapter, "The disease or sickness shall be faithful," that is to say, use what medicine thou wilt.

Galen saith, that the chief remedy to preserve from pestilence, is to purge the body from superfluous humours, to have a free and liberal mind, and to avoid the abundance of meat and drink. God saith, nothing preserveth, but the observation of his commandments. If we offend, the best remedy is penance and amendment of life. It maketh no force, how corrupt the air be, so the conscience of man in Christ be clean from sin. Though there die a thousand of the one side of thee, and ten thousand on the other

side, thou shalt be safe. (Psal. xci. 7.) He will let thee live, to serve longer in the world to the glory of his name; and if thou die, it is because no malice of the world should corrupt thy life, and bring thee from God. Further, it is to take thee away from the miseries of this world. If such as care not for God escape in the time of pestilence or war, it is to call them to a better life (Rom. ii. 4): if they amend not, they are reserved to a greater pain. This is spoken, not as though I contemned the gifts of God, philosophy and physic; but to take from men all vain hope in the artificial medicines, and give only the glory unto the name of God.

They abuse the name of God, who perform not the thing they promise in God's name, by any oath or vow made according unto the law of God; whether it be between man and God, as in the holy sacrament of baptism and the holy supper of the Lord, wherein we swear and promise to live after his will and pleasure. Or when man to man bindeth himself to any conditions or promises by the invocation of God's name or testimony of his own conscience. If the one keep not touch and promise with the other, he, that doth offend, abuseth not only his own faith, which should be always simple and true, but also contemneth the majesty and omnipotence of God, in whose name the oath was taken.

And not only the law of God, but also the law of man punisheth this horrible perjury, as ye may read how he that took the name of God in vain was stoned to death. So saith David. (Psal. v. 6.) So saith this commandment. God will not leave him unpunished, that nameth him in vain. Example we have in Ananias and his wife. (Acts, v.) The children of Israel were slain for perjury.

The emperor Justinian commandeth to put to death the blasphemers.

Such as trust in their own strength or riches, abuse and blaspheme this name of God. Which thing never was nor shall be unpunished in this world, in the world to come, or in both. Examples we have in Assur (Isa. x. 13), and Holofernes (Judg. xiii. 8). Ajax said he could overcome his enemies without God, but at the length was not overcome of his enemies, but killed himself.

Those, who swear by the name of God and likewise by the name of saints, offend against this commandment. As when the form of their oath is thus: "As help me God and all saints." For the oath must be only in the name of God. (Deut. vi. 13.) How this sin is punished, read Jeremiah, v. 2. Read the vii. of Joshua, and learn the form of a true oath there, when he constrained Achan to confess the truth by the virtue of an oath. It is a manifest argument of impiety and false belief, when people swear by any creatures; when writers give their books a holy and religious title, and the contents thereof is none other than the defence of superstition and inquiry of vain glory, or their own private commodity, and the abuse of the name of God.

They offend grievously against this commandment, who swear without necessity: more grievously, when for every light trifle or matter of nothing: most grievously, when men swear to maintain a false cause, to obtain an ill purpose, to oppress the truth, or to justify the wrong. The oath therefore must be (as Jeremy saith) in verity, judgment, and justice. There the prophet exhorteth the Israelites to reverence the name and glory of God, and that they believe stedfastly the universal providence of God, that they abstain from false oaths and perjury. For God seeth not only the works of man, but also the words and thoughts of the heart. Therefore no

man should swear, except he know perfectly the thing to be true that he sweareth.

That is the first thing that man should have in his conscience before he swears. The second, that he swear not temerously or lightly without reverence of God's majesty, but with judgment: that is to say, when necessity constraineth for the glory of God or defence of virtue, at the commandment of a just and lawfully appointed judge. Thirdly, that it be in justice, that the oath extend to nothing that is against God's laws. If the oath hath not these three conditions, it is perjury, whatsoever be sworn, and it blasphemeth God's name: as all those do who swear to please and flatter the superior powers, when they make ungodly laws; and those also who swear to the laws of men under the pretence of holy church, and persecute Christ's true members.

As for those who are common swearers, and be suffered to blaspheme without punishment, it is so abominable, that the magistrates, they who swear, and all the commonwealth wherein they dwell, shall at length smart for it. Regulus, the Roman, and the Saguntines, shame Christian men: who would not for any pain or punishment of the world violate or break their oath made by their false gods. The Saguntines burned themselves; Regulus returned from his native country and city of Rome to his most cruel enemies in Africa, and would rather suffer the extreme tyranny of his enemies than violate or break his oath that he had sworn.

CHAPTER VII.

The Fourth Commandment.

Remember to sanctify the sabbath day. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy works. The seventh day is rest unto God thy Lord, thou shalt

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do no work in it ; neither thy son, nor thy daughter, thy servant, nor thy maid, neither thy beast, neither the stranger that is within thy doors. For in six days God made heaven and earth, the sea and all things that are therein, and the seventh day rested. Therefore blessed God the seventh day, and sanctified it.

The cause and end, why this commandment was instituted is diverse. First, because man should upon this day call his intents and thoughts from the lusts, pleasures, vanities, and concupiscence of the world, unto the meditation of God and his works, to the study of Scripture, hearing of the word of God ; to call upon God with ardent prayer, to use and exercise the sacraments of God, to confer and give according to his ability alms to the comforting of the poor.

Then likewise God by this commandment provideth for the temporal and civil life of man, and likewise for all things that be necessary and expedient for man in this life. If man and beast, which is man's servant, should without repose and rest always labour, they might never endure the travail of the earth. God therefore, as he that intendeth the conservation and wealth of man and the thing created for man's use, commandeth this rest and repose from labour ; that his creatures may endure and serve as well their own necessary affairs and business, as preserve the youth and offspring of man and beast, till it come to a sufficient age and convenient force to supply the place and room of such, as death or disease shall deprive or disable from the execution and use of such travails as this careful life shall necessarily require. So saith the poet, "The thing cannot endure that lacketh successive rest."

That man and beast therefore might breathe, and have repose, this Sabbath was instituted not only

that the body should be restored to strength, and made able to sustain the travails of the week to come; but also that the soul and spirit of man, whilst the body is at rest, might upon the Sabbath so learn and know the blessed will of his Maker, that it not only cease from the labour and adversity of sin, but also by God's grace receive such strength and force in the contemplation of God's most merciful promise, that it may be able to sustain all the troubles of temptation in the week that followeth. For as the body, being always oppressed with labour, loseth its strength, and do perisheth; so doth the mind of man, oppressed with the cares and pleasures of this world, lose all her force, lust, and desire, that she had to the rest to come of eternal life, and so dieth not only the death of sin, but hasteth, what she can, to hate and abhor all virtue.

Almighty God therefore, not only in his commandments, but also at the first creation of the world, sanctified the seventh day (Gen. ii. 3): that is to say, appointed it to an holy use, or separated it from other days, wherein men travail in the business of the world. So is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase or manner of speech: as ye may read (Josh. xx. 7), "They sanctified Kadesh in Galilee." It is as much as to say in English, they chose or appointed the city of Kadesh to be a refuge or sanctuary for murderers, to be safe there, till the cause of the murderer might be known. Howbeit, ye may not think that God gave any more holiness to the Sabbath, than to the other days; for if ye consider Friday, and Saturday, or Sunday, inasmuch as they be days and the work of God, the one is no more holy than the other: but that the day is always most holy, in the which we most apply and give ourselves unto holy works. To that end he sanctifieth the Sabbath day; not that we should give our-

selves to evil, or such ethnical pastime, as is now used amongst Christian people : but, being free on that day from the travails of this world, that we might consider the works and benefits of God with thanksgiving, hear the word and law of God, honour him and fear him, and then learn who and where be the poor of Christ, our brethren in necessity, that want our help. The observation therefore of the Sabbath doth extend as well unto the faith we have in God, as unto the charity of our neighbour; and not only that, but also unto the beasts that travail in our business, and be our necessary servants, the which we should in no wise abuse, not only for their labour's sake, but also for the love of Him who hath commended them unto our service, Almighty God.

Thirdly, the Sabbath hitherto from the beginning of the world was and is a type and figure of the eternal and everlasting rest that is to come, as St. Paul diligently sheweth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and likewise St. Austin. Such, as believed the promise of God, declared by Moses, were led (Heb. iv. 8) by Joshua the prince into Palestine, and rested in Canaan : such, as hear the word of God and obey it, shall be carried into the celestial heavens by Jesus Christ, and rest in eternal joy. Read diligently that chapter, and thou shalt find a very necessary doctrine ; what is the cause, that the most part of men enter not into this eternal rest, viz. the contempt of our Captain's words Jesus Christ, who would lead us thither, haled we not back, and left we not his commandment.

Consider the persons rehearsed in this commandment : " Thy son, thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy woman-servant, thy beast, and the stranger within thy doors." Those thou must not without necessity constrain to any servile work upon the Sabbath; but see, that they exercise themselves upon

the Sabbath in hearing the word of God ; and see, they frequent the place of common prayers, and use the sacraments, as God commandeth. For those God hath commended unto thy charge, as long as they be with thee: not only that thou give them their wages that is due, but also see them aright instructed in the law of God, and that they live thereafter. For, if they perish by thy negligence, their blood shall be required at thy hand.

The stranger likewise within thy gate, though he be of another religion, thou shouldest essay to win him unto the knowledge and rites of thy religion, as thou seest here commanded unto the Israelites, and consequently unto us all. For we are bound no less, but rather more than they, to the love of God and our neighbour, and by express words are commanded to do the same. (Jam. v. 19.) Here let us all cry out and say, We have offended, and study to amend: for there is here condemned the avarice of all men that care not for God and his law at all, but use ungodly and uncharitably their servants and beasts, as though they were made of God only to serve their avaricious appetite, and not rather to serve the necessities of their masters, and likewise to glorify God, as his word commandeth.

Likewise in this commandment is condemned our uncharitable behaviour towards our neighbour, and likewise the ungodly and carnal fear that we have to teach a stranger the knowledge of God. We give him the thing we owe him not, saving by the law of nature, and the thing that we may well lack, or else obtain of another a supper or dinner for his money, and never make mention of the thing we owe him, in as much as we are Christians. Thus can Aristotle entreat his guests, and Plato give his alms. Our office is to communicate the knowledge of God with him for to move a communication, that this one

might know the other's faith. But this charity and hospitality is used but of few men. In case a man should make mention of any such alms, or entreat any place of the Scripture at dinner or supper, it were a cloying of the stomach, and taking away of the appetite; an ill-favoured mess, and the worst dish that can be brought unto the table.

Men say, that folk should be merry at the table, and let the preacher talk of Scripture: as though the law of God made men sorry, which containeth not only the solace and joy of man in this world, but also in time to come for ever. God take out of the hearts of men all fear and shame, that we freely confess him, as occasion shall be given, with Lot (Gen. xix. 1); who sat in the gates of Sodom to invite the strangers who came to the city into his own house, to keep them in virtue, and preserve them from vice. Read the chapter, and see wherein consisteth true hospitality.

Further, thou seest by this commandment that the Israelites might constrain the strangers within their city to hear and see their religion upon the Sabbath: as every well-ordered commonwealth now in the time of the Gospel should do the same, and constrain all people to hear the word of God, and see the ministration of their sacraments. This day is appointed also for man to consider and expound the works of God, the which he made in six days. For the least creature that God made shall teach man a knowledge of the Creator, if it be considered accordingly. So that man should not only use them, but also give God thanks for them, to augment faith, to confirm hope, and provoke love. Therefore God blessed the Sabbath, that is to say, made it honourable, sanctified it, appointed it to an holy use, gave it certain privileges, and would men to be that day holy.

For as he hath appointed six days for us to exercise ourselves in the business and travails of the world ; so hath he appointed the seventh to exercise the ceremonies of the church, which are instituted for the preservation of the ministry of the church : as to use the common prayer, hear the sermon, use the blessed supper of the Lord, and to give alms. (1 Cor. xi. 17. and xiv. 23.) And (xvi. 2) although the ceremony of the Sabbath be taken away (Col. ii. 16), which appertained only unto the people and commonwealth of the Hebrews ; yet one day of the week to preserve and use the word of God and his sacraments is not abrogated.

Therefore in this commandment are two things to be observed, the one ceremonial, during for the time : the other moral and never to be abolished, as long as the church of Christ shall continue upon the earth. The Patriarchs before the law (Gen. ii. 3), the Prophets in the time of the law (Exod. xx. 10), and we being delivered from the damnation of the law (1 Cor. xvi. 2), have one day to rest from labour, and to apply ourselves to the works of the Spirit ; which secretly in ourselves should be done every day together with handy labour, but upon the Sunday openly without the labour of our hands.

This Sunday that we observe is not the commandment of man, as many say, who would, under the pretence of this one law, bind the church of Christ to all other laws that men have ungodly prescribed unto the church ; but it is by express words commanded, that we should observe this day (the Sunday) for our Sabbath, as the words of St. Paul declare (1 Cor. xvi. 2) : commanding every man to appoint his alms for the poor on the Sunday. The text saith, " On one of the Sabbaths." It is an Hebrew phrase, and is as much to say, as on the Sunday ; as you may read the same manner of speech in

Luke and John (Luke, xxiv. 1. John, xx. 1), of the women who came to the sepulchre to anoint the dead body of Christ. Luke saith, "On one of the Sabbath early they came to the sepulchre." And so saith John by the same words, the which was the Sunday, as no man doubteth. For it is our faith that Christ rose the third day. So may you read Gen. i. 5, where the text saith, "It was evening and it was morning one day:" that is to say, the first day, which we call the Sunday.

And thus also say they, that were best learned in the tongues amongst Christian writers: John Chrysostom, Lactantius, and Erasmus. For the preservation of the true meaning of the word of God and right use of his blessed sacrament he hath given unto the church Apostles, Prophets, pastors, doctors, and others (Eph. iv. 11), who should teach us the Scripture and writings of the Prophets and Apostles, which were declared to be true, with many signs and tokens: that we should not waver with every wind, and be carried into errors by the doctrine of man: that we should not feign new doctrine out of our own brain, but believe as the holy church of the Patriarchs, Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles; who taught the people as they wrote, and wrote as they taught; that no man after their death should deceive the people, whom Christ redeemed with his precious blood, with false and preposterous doctrine. Those ethnic and Jewish doctors of the Pope, howsoever they brag of the name of the holy church, be no other than the defenders of the synagogue of antichrist.

Sure we are, that Christ, the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, be saved, and believed no more, nor any otherwise, than they have left unto us by writings. Better it is to be certain of our doctrine and salvation with this holy church, than to asso-

ciate ourselves with this rabble of liars; who boast and brag of their abominable and ethnical ceremonies, which are condemned in the Scriptures to be laws for the holy church. God give them grace to read the holy Bible, and to have a little understanding of it! Then thou shalt see, who and where is the holy church, that these dreamers attribute unto their father the devil and antichrist of Rome. And if they say unto thee, that thou must not take the text after thine own mind, but after the mind of holy doctors, who have written in the Scripture; think with thyself, that God hath given thee the Scripture to read therein to thy salvation, as well as unto the doctor.

Further, that thy doctor preach not a lie for the truth, God hath given thee the Scripture to judge thy bishop, doctor, preacher, and curate; whether he preach gall or honey, his own laws or God's laws.

Further, say boldly and fear not, for it is true, that in matters and causes of weight the doctors agree not one with another: no, many times not with themselves; as every man knoweth, who hath read them with judgment. And as good arguments shalt thou find in them to disprove, as to prove the things, that this late found catholic church of the devil would establish.

Again, think which was the most pure church and free from heresies: the church before the doctors wrote, which only was taught by the simple text and words of the Apostles; or the church that hath been taught these many years by the blind doctrine of men? Then thou shalt see that these doctors, that they speak of, have put out God's laws and brought in their own, as the pharisees and rabbins did in the old church. Be not afraid of their holy name, but trust to the holiness of Scripture, then shalt thou not be deceived. They say, the holy church must be heard and obeyed. True it is, but our faith is not

grounded upon those that be of the church, though they be the true ministers of God's word; but upon the word itself. (Matt. xvi. 18.) Therefore, when the authority or testimony of the church is alleged, man, that loveth his salvation, must search where and what the church is, what times, and when the writers were most sincere, and not believe these yesterday's birds, that sing as the popinjay, they know not what, as they be taught out of a shameless school that began with murder, is maintained with sacrilege and shall be destroyed with the clearness and brightness of the Son of man coming to judgment.

It appertaineth unto no man, in what authority soever he be, to judge who preacheth false, or who true, but unto the word of God only, which interpreteth itself, when it is with judgment conferred. But of this is required a more prolix work, which God shall give in time.

Now the works of this precept be also these: godly to preach his word, and to use the sacraments as he teacheth in his word, to hear them reverently that truly preach, to honour the word of God, and help to the preferment thereof as much as may be, to succour the professors thereof, which be, have been, and ever shall be (if they preach truly) in the most miserable condition of the world. (Matt. x. 22.) To neglect the preaching of God's word, as those do, who look for the fleece and care not for the sheep, is a work against this commandment.

To abolish the preaching of the word as those do, who have brought into the church massing and mumbling of canonical hours (as they call them), which neither they that say them, nor they that hear them, understand, is a work also against this commandment. They say, God understandeth them: what then? So he understandeth likewise the cuckoo and the lowing of the cow, which is as good and

better praise unto God than the superstitious and unknown prayer that thou mumblest. For they use the gift that God hath given them, to sound an unknown voice: and thou abusest the gift of God, which gave thee a tongue, to edify thyself and thy neighbour, likewise to preach the Lord omnipotent; but thou makest thy tongue an instrument to speak thou wottest not what. When thou shouldest cry for mercy and say, "Lord heal my soul, for I have offended thee;" thou sayest, "I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not departed by iniquity, from my God." Thus the Psalms and the books of the Scripture thou readest without judgment, and knowest not what Psalm is meet for thy necessity and the state of the people that be present, no more than he who never saw the Scripture. Yea, sometimes thou readest a false history, and either thou attributest the honour due to God unto the saint whom thou worshippest, or honourrest him upon earth, whose soul, peradventure, is in hell. For Austin so saith, that all be not glorified souls with God, whose relics men worshipped in the earth.

To teach false doctrine, is a work against this commandment. Likewise to depravate the use of the sacraments otherwise than they be taught in the Scripture, is against this commandment. It is to use them to another end than they were instituted for. So is, to honour them, as they do, that enchant the water of the font, and chafe it with many a sigh and deep-fetched breath. Such offend also, as honour the bread and wine, which the Scripture doth not only teach to remain in their substantial essence and nature without changing, but also reason and all the wits of man do the same. Further, the beasts of the earth, fowls of the air, and fishes of the water, know there is no change of bread nor wine, and witness

that the Scripture is true: bread to remain bread, and wine, wine. (1. Cor. x.)

Further, to augment the ceremonies of the church, and bring in a new Judaism and Aaronical rites, is against this commandment. As the bishops have used the matter, there be more ceremonies in the church of Christ than were in the church of the Jews, as it shall easily appear to him that shall confer our church with the books of Moses. Seneca reprehended the rites of the Jews, and chiefly the sanctifying of the Sabbath. What would he say, if he saw our churches, that have not the ceremonies commanded by God, but by man to the dishonouring of God?

To neglect a charitable deed to our neighbour upon the Sabbath day, is to break the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 12. Luke, vi. 9): not to cease from doing of ill, but to abuse the rest and ease of the Sabbath in sports, games, and pastimes, keeping of markets and fairs upon the Sabbath, is not to use well the Sabbath. It is as much as to ferry to God and to work to the devil, for specially all unlawful plays and sports be used upon that day.

It is against this commandment to keep or dedicate any feast to any saint, of what holiness soever he be. Therefore saith the law, "Ye shall celebrate the feast unto the Lord." (Exod. xxiii. 11.) This honour should be given only unto God. In the Old Testament was no feast ever dedicated unto any saint, neither in the New such feasts happened after the death of the Apostles, as it is written in Eusebius. And better authority have they not, that be the authors of these holy days, the which the council of Lyons hath given us; they have not above two hundred seventy and three years in age, and are the leaven of the Pope. In Trip Hist. there is no mention of saints' holy days; ew of St. Jerome, and likewise of St. Austin. The Sunday and the hours

thereof appointed for a decent order, to preach the word of God, to use the sacraments, to have common prayers, to provide for the poor, is to be observed, that all things may be done in order. (1 Cor. xiv. 40.)

As for the other laws that they have made concerning fasting and satisfaction for sin, and which they would defend under the pretence and title of mortification of the flesh; that gloss serveth not for their purpose. But their hypocrisy layeth wait to destroy the true doctrine of Christ, if it be not avoided. They teach neither what mortification is, neither how the flesh may be best kept under to obey the Spirit. Mortification signifieth either patience, which God requireth in the time of adversity; or temperance, commanded of God to refrain the lusts and concupiscence that fighteth against the Spirit. It signifieth not such voluntary fasts, celebrating of masses, or any such other doings of superstitious ceremonies, as man chooseth to do without the commandment of God. Of patience under the cross and of adversity St. Paul speaketh (2 Cor. iv. 10): "Always," saith he, "bear about with us the mortification of the Lord Jesu in the body, to that end that the life of Jesus may be manifested in the body." And in the same place, "Always we, that be living, for the love of Jesus are delivered to death, that the life of Jesus might appear in our mortal flesh:" this St. Paul calleth mortification, that is like unto the affliction of Christ.

Of temperance and sobriety in meat, drink, and all other things, it is written in Luke: "Beware your hearts be not oppressed with gluttony and drunkenness." (Matt. xvii. 21.) These kinds of spirits be not cast out, but with fasting and praying. Likewise whether we speak of patience in adversity, or temperance in felicity, both these works are com-

manded of God. And it is lawful for every man to choose for himself such exercises, as best be convenient to his own age and condition of his body; therefore Paul saith (1 Cor. ix. 27), "I chasten my body and bring it into servitude" to this end, that intemperance let not the Holy Ghost, withdraweth not his mind from prayer, make him not unapt to study, and to the vocation he was appointed unto. This is the end why we should do these works, not to merit our reconciliation for sin, but to labour against the devil, the world, sin, and the flesh, and with the Holy Ghost to preserve ourselves in the favour of God.

Temperance is in general commended unto all men and at all times. Howbeit, not one manner of exercise in this virtue can be appointed for all men; but every man may choose for himself, what exercise he listeth, and is most convenient for his disease. Such as be passed in age, and with the cares of this world have lost the strength of their bodies, need not so great abstinence from meats and drinks as those that be young and in the midst of their strength. As we may see in one man, David, who needed more exercises before he was put into exile than after; when scarce could the bones bear about the weak body that was far broken with the troubles and care of this world. Health is the great gift of God, and the fairest beauty of man or woman: therefore it must not be hurt; neither with over-much abstinence, neither with dissolute living. Would to God, people would follow the Scripture in this mortification, then the world would amend doubtless; but there is now nothing but a carnal liberty of the Gospel, which hindereth much the glory of God.

The pain of such, as violate this commandment, and do any vile work without necessity, is, that they should be stoned to death. (Numb. xv. 32.)

Thus I have rudely opened the first table of the ten commandments, which containeth four commandments: the which division, Josephus, Origen, Ambrose, and Austin do approve. In another place he numbereth but three in the first, and seven in the next table, by reason of a certain allegory. And him doth the Master of the Sentences follow: howbeit, the first division is true, as the text in Exodus is plain (xx. 1), where the tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," is but one commandment; as I have diligently searched all the editions that we have in the Hebrew tongue. With one point, period, and sentence, he concludeth the whole commandment, which many men divide into two: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house," that is one with them: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," is another. But the text declareth manifestly, that it is but one: for all is comprehended within one and under one sentence. In Deuteronomy (v. 21) certain latter editions make division of the text, but that is nothing to the purpose. There Moses repeateth the words unto them who knew before the division of the tables. Further, the printers therein follow the mind of one Maimonides, an Hebrew, and not the original in Exodus. Further, in the oldest edition and print that I have seen (as far as I know, there is none older; if there be, it is but one), the tenth commandment in Deuteronomy is not divided, the which edition Venice gave unto us, Anno 1494. Further, Onkelos, the Chaldee interpreter in Deuteronomy, maketh but one commandment of the tenth. I wonder that some, which be not ignorant of the tongues, follow not the truth of the text, but make the commandment that forbiddeth images a precept ceremonial. So I might say this was also ceremonial, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before my face." For all the commandments be of one

virtue and strength. If the one may be in effect ceremonial, so may the other: but these opinions I pass over at this time.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Second Table.

Honour thy father and mother, that thou mayst have long life in the land that the Lord thy God shall give unto thee.

In the first table are comprehended all the works, that appertain unto such religion and honour as belongeth only unto God: as in the first precept, knowledge, fear, faith, and love of God. In the second is forbid all external idolatry. In the third, external profession of God's names, his word, and his works; as by prayer, thanksgiving, preaching, and confessing his truth before the world. In the fourth, how we should honour him with public sacraments and ceremonies in the church. In this second table are comprehended all such works as appertain unto God and man. And in this table is prescribed how, and by what means, one man may live with another in peace and virtue in this civil life, during the time of this mortal body upon the earth.

Many noble wits have applied great diligence and study to prescribe such laws as might best and most commodiously govern and keep the people in a politic felicity, to live quietly, prosperously, and wealthily: as Lycurgus the Lacedæmonian, Solon, Plato, Aristotle, the Greeks: Numa Pompilius, Cicero, and others, the Romans: amongst Christians, Constantine, Justinian, and others. Those men have done somewhat to associate people in cities and realms by wisdom, to keep them in an honest order with virtuous laws, and to remove the occasion of vice and discord by justice.

Howbeit, none of them all, nor all of them together, have prescribed so perfect and absolute a form of a politic wealth, as Almighty God hath done unto his people in this second table and six rules. Neither have they so equally pondered the diversity of sin and transgression of justice, as this law doth; nor so indifferently prescribed correction and punishment according unto the gravity and greatness of the fault, but are too cruel in the less offence, or too merciful in the greater: as ye may see in the injuries of theft punished, and blasphemy of God with adultery, unpunished.

After that he had gathered together this people into one company and multitude, brought them out of Egypt, and appointed them a land and cities, where they should live, as members of one commonwealth, he prescribed unto them certain laws, without which no commonwealth can long endure. For it is no less mastery to keep a realm in wealth from the dangers to come, than to win it from adversity, when adversity is present.

The first law to preserve a commonwealth is, that the people thereof know how to reverence and honour God aright, who is the president and defender of all cities and realms. If he be neglected, there followeth doubtless a ruin and change of the commonwealth. This saw all they, who wrote laws for the preservation thereof: not only Moses and Christian writers, but also the ethnics, as Aristotle (*Polit. lib. vii. cap. 8*); where he numbereth two works to be done in the city: "the principal work is religion at the altar of God, which men call sacrifice." They knew, that no city nor realm could continue long in wealth, except they had the favour of God; though they could not tell how to honour him aright. We likewise know the same, the favour of God first and chiefly to preserve the commonwealth;

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and be assured by his word, how we may honour him, that is to say, as it is taught us in the first table and four first precepts.

The second law necessary for every commonwealth is, that the people among themselves live in peace and concord without discord and dissension: As Sallust saith, little things by concord increase, and great things by discord decrease. That saw the poor shepherd Melibœus in Virgil, when he said, "Lo! whither (or into what miseries) hath discord brought the wretched citizens!"

Not only Rome, and other most noble commonwealths, lost their liberties by discord, but also the commonwealth of the Israelites. As ye may read (1 Kings, xii.), how of one kingdom was made two; for the discord that God suffered to be among themselves for the idolatry of king Solomon: where ye have an example, that no commonwealth can endure, where the precepts of the first table be neglected.

Almighty God therefore, after that he taught the people what was to be done towards him in the first table; sheweth in the second table what we should do, one to the other of us, that peace and concord might be among us: which cannot be, where one knoweth not, what reverence and honour should be done to the other. For where all men will be alike, there is neither wealth nor virtue; but contention and hatred, which is the matter and ground of all calamities and mischief. The law of God therefore, in the first front of this second table, doth appoint and institute a certain empire and dominion to be had among his people, that one person might be known from the other. It commandeth obedience to the superior powers, saying, Magnify or reverence thy father and mother. If this order be kept, there is a reward appointed for the observation thereof, as the text saith, "Thou shalt live long upon the earth." After that people of

commonwealth know each of them their duties, it necessary there do follow a law to maintain them peace and unity. Therefore followeth it in the ble, "Thou shalt not kill," which precept is a munition and defence of the peace.

Howbeit, because there followeth alteration and change of the commonwealth, it must be provided, how the places of those that die, may be again furnished; that with the departure of one may follow the succession of another. Wherefore God putteth the seventh canon that defendeth marriage, whereby preserved this commonwealth. And as godly it continueth, as it began; the which law is not only necessary for the preservation of the commonwealth to come, but also to preserve the state present in peace and tranquillity. For never was there greater occasion of discord and debate between commonwealth and commonwealth, prince and prince, private persons and private persons, than from the abuse and violating of marriage, and committing fornication, with such-like vices: as it is to be seen by Dinah (Gen. xxxiv. 29), by Thamar, by the priest's wife abused by the Benjamites (Jud. xix. 29). For the rape of Helena Troy perished: for the oppressing of Lucretia, Rome and others. Then as there be laws to preserve the persons themselves of the commonwealth, so there must be laws to preserve such goods as do appertain unto the members of the commonwealth, that one do no wrong to the other, but every man be content with his own condition and proper goods, and not to usurp authority over his neighbours. Therefore the right law concerning defence of proper and private goods is, Thou shalt do no theft.

Howbeit, seeing we are frail and so ill, that many times we transgress some or all these laws that preserve the commonwealth, it is necessary to find

and prepare some remedy to have the transgressor punished, and the person who is hurt and offended restored unto his right. Therefore is there this clause and rule in the law; "Thou shalt give no false testimony against thy neighbour;" which is the ninth commandment, and bindeth as well the superior powers to see equity and justice without respect of persons, as the cause requireth, observed: as those who shall be witnesses in a matter doubtful to say as they know truly. And likewise that in buying and selling, and in all other contracts, men use no fraud to get their goods. These laws now I will open, in order as they stand, plainly and simply as I can, to the understanding of the text, and of them I will speak severally, they being the fountains and original of all politic laws.

The first law, that establisheth the authority of the superior powers, beginneth with the name of the father and mother. For after and next unto God we owe most reverence unto them, of whom we have received this natural life by the help of God: and they likewise have sustained the pains of our education and bringing up. Then under the name of the parents are included all other persons to whom we owe obedience and love; as the country, where we were born, or where we have our living, that we be true and faithful unto it. We ought to garnish it what we may, and enrich it with all godly knowledge, arts, and other commodities; not to hurt it, but to die for it, as justice shall require. Then the prince or magistrate, that hath the defence of the country, and the people of the same committed unto his charge. Tutors appointed for youth, such as teach any craft or handy means to live by. The doctors and teachers in the ministry of the church, whom the Scripture calleth the fathers of the people. (1 Cor. iv. 15.) Then such as be by nature and parentage our kins-

k.; also all that be our elders, unto whom we owe
edience. These be the persons, who are under-
d by the father and mother.

The text saith, that I should honour them. The
rich word in the Hebrew hath a greater force and
length than one word in Latin or English can ex-
ess. It significth, to set much by, to have in
timation, to prefer and extol; and requireth these
ections in the heart, and not only external reve-
nce, such as be fair words, and outward gestures
thout the love of the heart: to obey them in all
ings honest, agreeing with the law of God, not
ntemn them, neglect them, hate them, or be un-
d to them; to help them as we be able, if neces-
y require; to put our lives for them, and to pay
em their due, and that without murmur and
udge. For all those that I have rehearsed be as
r fathers, and as it were a second God appointed
r us upon the earth.

Wherefore, if thou wilt have a very true image to
press God omnipotent, thy sole God and Maker,
nto thy reason and external senses, set those su-
rior powers before thine eye, who have or do
vail for thy wealth and commodity, thy father and
other, as is before said. The prince and king, that
availeth how to keep thee in thine own country in
ealth and felicity, that thou be not made pri-
ner nor bondman unto a strange nation, thy adver-
ries and thy mortal enemies. The land itself
ingeth thee fruit and all things necessary for thy
e, the which thy fathers won with their blood, and
aintained with their bodies and goods. Thy preacher
lleth the will of God, and all his study is to bring
ee to eternal felicity. Unto those thou owest of
ty a filial reverence and honour, the which was
served also among the gentiles, as Juvenal the

poet saith ; who thought it a fault worthy of death, if the younger honoured not the elder.

As for the defence of the country, it was and is granted of all natural men, so that there needeth no testimony nor example. The profane writer, Horace, thus speaketh, that " it is sweet and decent to die for the country." The Lacedæmonians, who were slain in Termin, had this epitaph upon their graves ; " Thou stranger, say, that thou sawest us here dead, whilst we obeyed the holy laws of our country."

As for our honour and reverence to such, as teach us the word of God, it is shewed in the example of the Corinthians, and likewise of the Galatians, who were so prompt to obey Paul before they were seduced, that they would have plucked out their own eyes to have done Paul honour.

Valerius Maximus (lib. ii. cap. 10) writeth how in Rome the elders were always taken as fathers of the younger, and that no youth should sit at any feast, till their elders had place : they should be the last that sat, and the first who rose from the table.

Every man should reverence and honour those superior powers, not for fear, but for love. And he should consider that God beginneth not this second table with the dominion and empire of the father in vain, or without cause : but meaneth, that we should none otherwise love the superior powers of the earth, and be affectionated to them, than to our natural parents, and obey them in all things that are consonant or not against the law of God.

Likewise the superior powers should be none otherwise affected with love towards their subjects, than the father is towards the son. Consider the work and ordinance of God in this superiority and dominion that preserveth the good, punisheth the

ill, advanceth virtue, and oppresseth vice, to the preservation and wealth of the commonwealth.

Thine office is to consider in what place the superior is set, and how the devil travaileth without ceasing to trouble the tranquillity, peace, and good order of every commonwealth, by sedition, treason, war, and lascivious and dissolute manner of living. Further, he laboureth continually, to subvert the prince and governor thereof, to bring him from virtue to vice, that they may both, with ungodly laws and evil example, pervert the people, and bring them from God. As thou mayest see by David and Saul, two virtuous and godly kings at the beginning of their reign. Saul, he utterly lost in this world, and in the world to come. He so intricated and wrapped David in his snares, that scarce could he find his colour and return to grace. Mark how he did dare and blind Solomon, the wisest who ever reigned, and brought him unto idolatry.

Remember, that they, who rule, be men, and have likewise their infirmities, and, without a singular grace, cannot govern well. As Solomon saith, "that the eye see, and the ear hear, God giveth both." The meaning of the which text is, that if the magistrate have good counsel, and see what is best for the commonwealth, and the people obey it, it is the work of God. No human sapience, diligence, and industry, is sufficient for this vocation. Therefore, St. Paul saith (2 Cor. iii. 5), "Our ability and sufficiency is of God." When we have considered the malice of the devil against such as rule in the world, and likewise the rulers' proper infirmities, then let us consider likewise, our own sins and naughty life, for the punishment whereof, God giveth many times cruel and ungodly governors; as he giveth good, wise, and loving princes to such as do fear his name.

If they happen to fall from God and follow vice, it is not thy duty straightway to calumniate, **speake**, move sedition, cast off obedience, love, and fear, that thou owest unto them : but pray for them, study what thou canst to call them again to God ; be prone to forget and remit the offence. Remember David and Saul, who fell and yet returned : dissemble at such faults as be curable, lest the public peace be troubled. Remember, though he be naught, that ruleth the place and office that he is in, it is the order and work of God. So if thou put difference between the office itself, which is good, and the officer, who is evil ; it shall keep thee in a fear, that thou reverence a good and godly governance in an ill governor. As Paul loved the policy and laws of Rome, and never taught sedition, though he hated Caligula and Nero, the emperors, who occupied the empire and dominion.

Beware, therefore, of contumacy and disobedience against the superior powers : obey them in all things, where they command thee nothing against God's laws. So commandeth Paul (Eph. vi. 1), for they are appointed unto that place of governance, to be God's vicars, to execute his law, his will, his pleasure, to bring men unto God, and not to carry men from God. For in case they instigate their subjects to the transgression of God's laws, we must obey neither them, neither their laws ; they be not then our fathers, but rather strangers, who would draw us from the obedience of God, who is our very father. It is not decent, that their authority should be above, and God's authority under. For as man's authority dependeth on God's, so should it bring men, and lead men to God. Where they command nothing against God's law, thou hast heard before what reverence thou owest unto them.

A thing more unnatural is there not than to see

the son dishonour the father, the subject his superior: as we learn not only by the Scripture, but also by the examples of all other beasts of the earth and fowls of the air, except a few. Therefore, the book of Job sendeth us to them to learn wisdom, (Job, xii. 7.) So doth Pliny shew, what wisdom the beasts of the earth have taught man. Be not as the viper, that gnaweth out the belly of her dam, and seeketh her own life with her dam's death. Follow the nature of the picon, that in her youth nourisheth the old days of her parents. Thus thou art bound to do. (Exod. xx. 12.) If thou do it, thou shalt have the reward; which is, to live long upon the earth. If thou do it not, be assured that God will punish it, though man do not. Read the five-and-thirtieth chapter of Jeremiah the Prophet, and mark how God punished the children of Israel for disobedience, and rewarded the Rechabites for obedience of their fathers' will.

Now, it is necessary to know the superior's duty. First, the father's to the son; then of others, who bear rule in the world.

The fathers' office, is to teach and bring up their children in the knowledge and discipline of God, to know him aright, and keep them from wantonness and ungodly life (Eph. v. 4), not to provoke them to ire, but gently win them to virtue and love, without severity and rigour, if fair means can avail: if not, to use the rod and punishment, as he seeth the cause require; and not to be remiss and negligent in correcting his child's fault, neither to wink at his ill doings. (Prov. xiii. 24. xxiii. 13.) But, alas! how can this be done, where the parents themselves can scarce repeat by heart, the articles of the faith, the Lord's prayer, and ten commandments? How can those miserable persons teach their children the meaning of their belief, the virtue of prayer, the danger of sin, or right use of the sacraments? This the

world oweth unto the holy church, that is extolled unto the higher heavens, that hath robbed people not only of the Scripture in a known tongue, but also preferred unto the cure of souls, such as sing *sol fa*, and can do nothing less than the thing that appertaineth unto their office.

Now, what the prince and magistrate should be, what their office is towards their subjects, what is their reward if they govern well, and what their pain if they do the contrary, it shall appear by the Scripture.

What the King should be, it is written Deut. xvii. and likewise, what things they should do, or not do. "If thou wilt," saith God unto the Israelites, "have a king, thou shalt take him that I choose in the midst of thy brethren (understand that now all kings, be they good or bad, are put in their authority by God); thou canst make no stranger king over thee." In these words is declared, that whosoever will govern a commonwealth aright, must love it, and the members thereof, as the father his children: as Xenophon saith, "a good prince differeth nothing from a good father." Aristotle sheweth many conditions, that are necessarily required in him, who should be preferred to the government of a commonwealth.

The first is, that he love it, and the state thereof. Thus required likewise Christ in Peter, when he commended the people unto his charge, saying, "Peter, lovest thou me?" "Yea, Lord," said he, "and that thou knowest." "Then, Peter, feed my sheep." (John, xxi. 19.) He shall not profit in the regiment of the civil wealth, nor ecclesiastical, without a singular love unto the preservation thereof.

The king there, is forbidden to multiply horses, and to carry the people again into Egypt; not that the king should have no horses, or permit none of

his subjects, if occasion required, to travel into Egypt; but that he should not glory in his own strength, and cause the people to trust in the might and power of the flesh, as though by man their commonwealth might be preserved, or their enemies so overcome in time of war, as Pharaoh and the Egyptians did.

Further, it is forbidden the king to have many wives; and the cause is, lest they should withdraw his heart from God. Neither should the king multiply for himself, great abundance of gold and silver. But thus the king must do, when he reigneth in his kingdom, cause an exemplar of Deuteronomy to be written out, and that book should be with him, and he should read therein all the days of his life, and learn to fear the Lord his God, and to observe all the precepts thereof, and laws, to do them.

Further, his heart should not be lift up above his brethren, and should not decline from the precepts of the book, neither to the left hand, neither to the right; that he may prolong his days in his reign, he and his children, in the midst of Israel. (Deut. xvii.)

The first care and charge of the magistrate or prince must be, to see their subjects instructed in the first table, and the precepts thereof; which cannot be, except they appoint learned and convenient ministers in the church, who teach none other doctrine, than the Holy Bible containeth.

Concerning their office of government, it is described (Psalm ci.), to live well themselves, and to observe mercy and justice, to punish vice, and to extol virtue. Read that Psalm; there shalt thou see a prince's office, his life and family described; how he should live after the word of God, and govern his people thereby; what servants he should have in his court, and what persons should be banished out of the court; and that he should use the industry of

such, as be good in public and private business, as it is in the sixth verse. It may happen, a prince to have evil servants, extortioners, pollers, pillers, oppressors of the poor, neither commodious for his majesty, nor for the people of his realm. Such as live in wickedness, blaspheme God, and can do none other thing than devour the bread of the poor, those David saith, in the seventh verse, he will banish out of the court.

In the eighth and last verse, he saith, he will not only rid his court of such evil persons, but also daily give diligence to purge and cleanse all his realm of such evil doers. Princes, who have this study to maintain the glory of God, and to preserve justice and equity, if by infirmities they fall sometimes, must be borne withal, and their faults either hid or healed ; as it is to be seen in Solomon and David. If their offence be hurtful and slanderous to the word of God, and pernicious to the commonwealth, the preacher of God's word must not dissemble, but correct it by the word of God plainly without colour or circumlocution, as Nathan did David ; Elijah, Ahab ; John, Herod. For that which is spoken to all men, is as though it were spoken to no man. So doth Paul teach.

The princes are called *reges*, à *regendo* ; that is to say, they are called kings, which name cometh of a verb, that signifieth to govern. They must lead the people and themselves by the law, and not against the law ; be ministers of the law, and not ministers over the law. Cato saith well therein, " Obey the law that thou madest thyself." It should not offend the magistrates to be reprehended by the preacher of the law of God, but rather, they should take it in good part, and thank God that they have one to admonish them of evil in time ; remembering the words in Ecclesiasticus (x.), " To-day a king, and to-morrow he shall die."

All the estates of the world, in their honour; should remember the words written in Genesis (ii. 7), "The Lord God made man the clay of the earth." Which words should admonish all men of their condition and original. Why then art thou proud, ashes and clay? This should all others remember, who boast so of their nobility, and think there be no men but they. In time past, men were accounted noble for virtue and justice; such as had done some noble act, either in peace, in governing the commonwealth, or in war, for the defence of their country, and the heads thereof. There were born no gentlemen, but men were made gentlemen for their noble and virtuous acts. The nobility now-a-days are degenerate: they apply no study to follow the wisdom, learning, and virtues of their predecessors, but think it enough to have the name, without effect. Their wisdom and learning once ruled others, now they contemn learning, and scarce can understand a learned man, when he talketh of wisdom and learning.

Trajan the emperor said unto the captain of his horsemen, when he gave him a sword, "Use this sword for me, if I command the things that are right; if not, use it against me." There should be no vice excused, neither defended, under the pretence and cloak of God's works; neither for the dignity of any place, manifest injuries and wickednesses be permitted to reign. But the word of God should always, without respect of persons, stand in its full strength and power, whose office it is, to teach the ignorant, rebuke the transgressors, chastise the intractable, and institute man to all kinds of virtue. (2 Tim. iii. 16.)

They should remember, that kingdoms be altered and changed because of sin, and that God removed likewise princes from their dignities, by reason of

sin; as it is to be seen by Saul, the first king among Christian people. (1 Sam. xvi. 1.) All kings and commonwealths of Christianity were instituted, specially to preserve the ministry of the church, and the estimation of God's word, that people might know, and live according to it, and as it teacheth; learn to decline all unjust wars and battles, defend themselves, their realms, and all others, who are persecuted for justice; as Abraham did his neighbours, and Lot his nephew. (Gen. xiv. 16.) They are to promote peace and make concord, that they may be the children of God. (Matt. v. 9.)

No Christian man will take me here, as though I extenuated the princely honour of kings and other magistrates, commended to us by God: whom I honour, reverence, and love; and know by the Scripture, what I owe unto them, that is to say, both goods and life. (Rom. xiii. 6.)

Further, what man's laws give, I would that all men should observe. The subjects of every civil wealth must bear the charges and burden that is necessary for the preservation thereof, and must not refuse to pay tribute unto the superior powers, under the pretence of Christian liberty; but pay without grudge, whatsoever lawfully, and of duty, is demanded; remembering the liberty, that Christ hath given us, is deliverance from sin, from death eternal, the horror of hell; and is to restore us to everlasting life, and not to deliver us from the obedience of princes in such civil cases. (Matt. xxii. 21.) Give the thing to Cæsar that is due unto Cæsar, and unto God, the thing due unto God.

Christ putteth a difference between those two great lords (God, and the civil magistrate), that people should beware they give not the thing that is due to the one, unto the other. But this order is changed: for where God cominandeth to give tri-

bute and executions, helps, or subsidies unto Cæsar, the people are made so blind by the falsehood of antichrist's ministers, that they will rather give a golden crown to the building of an abbey, foundation of a chantry, or for a mass of requiem, than one silver penny for the defence of their commonwealth. And the thing that is due to God, they give unto Cæsar, or the civil magistrate; that is to say, their belief and knowledge of God. This is only due unto God and his word, and not to king nor emperor; or any other magistrate. This is to change God's institution.

We see daily, how the princes of the world persecute the Gospel and the gospel-like use of the sacraments. We pervert, therefore, God's law; which commandeth to give tribute to princes of the commonwealth for the preservation thereof, and in matters of religion to give ourselves, both body and soul, unto God, and learn not only by the Scripture to love the superior powers, as God's ordinance; but also consider other examples, whereas men shall see obedience and love of the subjects towards their prince to be the strength of their realm.

Scipio was demanded, when he came in warfare into Africa, how he durst enter so strong and mighty a realm? He said, because of the obedience of his soldiers. For they were so obedient, that if he bade any of them fall from the top of a steeple into the water, they would not have disobeyed him. See the order and concord among beasts in the air, as long as their king liveth, among the cranes and the little bees. Nor if they govern not the people well, which be their brethren, they may read their own damnation in Ecclesiastes (x.), in Ezekiel (xix. 1), and in Jeremiah, and likewise the ire of God, that they hearkened not to the voice of the preacher,

It is, therefore, the office of every magistrate to learn how to reign over the people by the law of God, and to desire wisdom of him to know and follow the things that appertain to the ministration of the commonwealth. For of him alone cometh all wisdom, which the godly rulers knew, and who were thereby fortunate in their governance. If the magistrate would read every morning, before he entertain any matter for the commonwealth, the 101st Psalm, it should lead him to a singular wisdom and marvellous dexterity in judgment.

The people should daily pray for their magistrates, for on them depend the peace and tranquillity of the commonwealth. (1 Tim. ii. 2. Psalm xx.) It is a great iniquity for the people to neglect their office herein. There be proper Psalms written by the Prophet David that appertain unto this purpose. At the creation, coronation, or inauguration of the magistrate, read the Psalm where people made supplication at the coronation of king Solomon for a prosperous governance of the commonwealth. When the magistrate shall take any battle or war in hand, the 20th Psalm. When God giveth victory, the 21st. And so for all other necessities, that they may defend the orphans and poor widows with all other oppressed wrongfully. For the palace of a prince, or magistrate, should be the refuge and sanctuary of the poor, where they might offer boldly, as before God, their gifts and oppressions.

So it appeareth in the prayer of the people for king Solomon (Psal. lxxii. 1), saying, "Give, O God, thy judgments unto the king." For no magistrate can govern without some form of judgment and certain laws. But because all judicials and decrees, statutes and laws made by man, do many times fail, either for their own proper imperfections or by the corrupt ministration of the judge; the

people desired God to give their king his judgments which are written in his laws, and those the magistrate must observe. By the which words we know that all godly laws should be asked and sought out of the Scripture.

The sum and conclusion of this fifth precept, and all that I have spoken in it, is, that such as the Lord hath appointed in the earth to rule over us, those we must reverence, honour, and obey, with all fear and love; and that we derogate nothing from their dignity with contempt, contumacy, or unkindness. For seeing God would his ordinance that he instituted to be inviolate, it is our office to observe the degrees and order of pre-eminence as he hath instituted.

CHAPTER IX.

The Sixth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

I said before, that concord and peace must be preserved always in the commonwealth, which thing dependeth on the love of God and our neighbours. Therefore doth God, immediately after the institution of the commonwealth and civil assemblance of his people, set in order before and appoint every man to a certain place and vocation: the one to be the father, the other the son; the one to be master, the other servant; the one to be a disciple, the other an instructor; the one to be the younger, and the other the elder. And each of these knows by the precept and commandment afore, what his office is, and how he should live in his vocation.

In this precept he removeth the occasion of discord and debate that might happen between the members of this commonwealth by reason of murder and man-

slaughter. Therefore forbiddeth he all injuries, violences, force, and other uncharitable means, wherewithal we might hurt our neighbour's body; and likewise requireth, that in case we can do any thing to the help of our neighbour, we diligently apply our service to his use, to procure the things that appertain unto his tranquillity, to save him from adversities, and to give him our helping hand, when his trouble shall require; seeing there is nothing more dear to man than his body and life, as the law of nature teacheth. God, by this law, defendeth it against the devil and devilish wilful hatred of man, that sometimes is so carried away with affections of the flesh, that he honoureth not this precept, but contemneth the image of God in his neighbour, hateth his own flesh, and executeth a bestly rage and tyranny on his brother's body, more like a furious lion and mad dog than a reasonable creature; not only to the destruction of him who is killed, but to the loss and perdition of his own body and soul for ever, if he repent not.

God in this commandment forbiddeth not only the murder done with the hand, but also the murder of the heart and tongue. (Mat. v. 21. 1 John, iii. 15.) In the murder done of the hand is forbidden all private revenge between private persons, who will be judges in their own cause; who begin with blows, then followeth hurting of some member of the body, or clean destruction of it, at the last murder of the whole body. Some kill with the sword, some with poison, some with enchantments, some dissemble, as though they played, and so in dissembling put him out of the way whom they hate. Some kill not themselves, nor will be seen to break the peace; but shoot their bolts by other men, and wound and kill him, who is an hundred miles from them. These the laws of God punish with death

(Gen. ix. 6. Matt. xxvi. 52) ; so do likewise the laws of men.

Such as procure and seek the death of man privily the law punisheth the more cruelly ; not with the sword, neither fire, or any other solemn manner of death ; but he should be inclosed in a trunk with a dog, a cock, a snake, and an ape, and so be cast into the water, and die among these rigorous beasts. (Justin. lib. iv. tit. 18.)

Those yet less offend, than such as conspire the death of any prince, or governor of the commonwealth, or by treason intend the destruction of the commonwealth, or of any man who governeth therein. Those have their pain of death appointed *Legē Julianā, de publicis Judiciis*. So hath the law respect of the persons, and will know who is killed, a private person, or a governor ; a man, or a woman ; one of his own blood, or a stranger ; that the pain may be according. In the ministration whereof the magistrates, or prince, should always observe justice, as well against one man, as the other, without respect of persons ; remembering that it appertaineth nothing to their office to save or damn, to give one a charter of life, and put another who hath done the like offence to death.

The magistrate is but a minister of the law, and is bound for the law's sake to suffer him to live, who transgresseth not the law. So is he bound to put him to death, who hath offended the law. So God commandeth (Deut. xix. 13), that the judge shall have no mercy upon the offender, and sheweth three causes why. The one, that he should take the ill out of the commonwealth : the other is a promise of God's grace for his so doing : the third is, that others might fear to do the same. We have examples thereof in the captains who were hanged against the sun (Num. xxv. 4), and of Miriam, Moses'

sister, that when she was a leper, was compelled to obey the law, as well as the poorest of the congregation. (Num. xii. 14.)

It is ill done, therefore, of princes and magistrates, to give charters and privileges to save such as by the law should die. And a shrewd example it is for others, who think, when need is, I shall have friends likewise to beg my pardon. In case it cannot be obtained, he that laboureth in the cause will scarce be contented that his request can take no effect, the matter being of no great weight, being, before by others obtained through like grace. Thus, in dispensing of an ill fact, both God and man are offended, and the prince, or magistrate, who dispenseth with the fault of another, maketh himself culpable of the same crime, as it is written, Prov. xvii. 15.

On the other part, the judges, who condemn the right and deliver the wrong, commit the same horrible offence, and are worthy by the law to suffer the pain that is due unto him, who should for his offences die. Like pain should such suffer, as by letters or other defence procure the let or delay of justice in saving or relieving the offender, which is an horrible offence, and daily used (the more pity) in every assize and sessions. They pretend a work of charity and good deed to save a man, who is worthy of death; but the Judge of all equity, mercy, and justice, saith, that they should not extend their mercy to such a person, nor in such a case, but commandeth without mercy to put them to death that justice condemneth.

Men will be in an evil cause more merciful than the Fountain himself of mercy: but where they should be merciful in remitting a private displeasure done unto them by a poor man, then will they execute not only justice, but also tyranny. So pervert they

the law of God, and judge evil good and good evil, and likewise reprehend the ordinance of God. God gave certain privileges, that whosoever killed against his will might flee to a sanctuary to save his life ; but he who killed of malice or of a pretended purpose might be brought to the gallows, not only out of the sanctuary but from the altar. (Deut. xix. 12.) And this is not only the law of Moses, but also the law of Christ, that saith (Matt. xxvi. 52), " He that striketh with the sword shall perish." When it pleaseth God such a transgressor shall be taken, the judge who judgeth, and the person who is judged, should think this is the time that the commonwealth should be delivered from an evil person : and he that must suffer should think this is the time that God will punish me for my sin, and call me to his mercy.

The prince should suffer the ordinance of God to take place. For as Terence saith, " Over-much pity teacheth many things evil ;" the which vice he teacheth men to beware of. Also in another place. Therefore, he that would purchase a charter, should rather come to the prison to comfort the afflicted man, and say, This trouble is the preacher sent from God to bring thee to acknowledge thy sin, and to call thee to penance. Thou seest how the devil hath prevailed against thee. Following the blindness of thine affection, thou gavest place to the devil, who delighteth in the evil doings of men. Therefore thou must suffer the pain of the law, and from henceforth thou shalt give no place more unto him. Know Christ, and believe that in him thou shalt suffer no pain for thy transgressions, but only the death of the body. He shall now carry thee from the gallows into eternal joy, as he did the thief on the cross.

Obey therefore the commandment of God in this public ministration of justice. For now is thy time to die, not that God hateth thee, but of a sin-

gular love that thou shouldest hurt no more thyself and others. Beg with me in Christ thy charter of God, and his mercy shall give thee eternal life, which thou mayest boldly by the law claim, and not to put him in a false hope of man's remission, who can give no pardon at all, if they do well.

In case a private person, a man who loveth peace, happen to be oppressed at any time by those breakers of peace, or robbers by the highway-side or otherwise, and cannot defend his life and body without using resistance, and the oppressor will not be content, neither with reason nor with fair words, neither the man oppressed may in no wise find place to avoid the fury of this oppressor in defending his own life: if he kill his adversaries, he no more offendeth God's laws nor man's laws, than though he killed a wolf or mad dog: as Moses killed the Egyptian, or as the godly magistrate killeth more privately the thief, or more openly defendeth himself by war, when he cannot maintain or recover the right of his commonwealth otherwise.

Then to use the extreme remedy of battle, he offendeth not. So is it to be judged of those, who will oppress by violence others, that either offend not, or be ready to offer their causes to the vicars of God, the judges of the earth. If they find their own death, it is to be judged that it is none other thing than the just judgment of God, that the one should defend his life, and the other perish. A great ill is it; that those ill men, who dare not bring their cause to be judged before the lawful magistrate, are permitted so licentiously to trouble the peaceable people of a realm without punishment; which is against God's laws and man's laws, and the occasion of great murder, which provoketh the ire of God against the magistrates for the sufferance of so great an evil.

It knoweth how men, that govern after Aristotle's

politics, will excuse this evil. They will say that laws must be made according to the nature of the people to whom they are prescribed. But God's laws say, man must obey the law, and not the law man. If they be Christians, it shall not be a servitude to live after the laws of Christ, who should govern chiefly both the superior and the inferior. And so saith Aristotle, "It is no servitude to live after the form of the commonwealth, but safety." It would not be hard to remove this evil, if every man, who shall see the peace broken in a city, had authority to sunder the persons, and bind the peace-breakers to a peace by their words: and he, who broke his faith and promise to him that required it, to lose his head, as it is used in some commonwealths.

Murder is committed likewise by hand by such as are every man's men for money; as those runagates and lance-knights are, who sell both body and soul to such as will hire them, they care not whether the cause be wrong or right. They should neither receive by the law of God, nor any Christian man give them any thing, except the cause be good. If it be, every man is bound to defend it: if not, no man. This cannot be known of all men: but if the cause be nought, God excuseth no man; but esteemeth him a murderer of his own life, and the magistrate, who hireth him, the occasion thereof.

This precept is not understood only of the external murder, but forbiddeth also the murder of the heart; which though it deserve no punishment in this world, yet God accounteth it worthy of death. As it is to be seen Gen. iv. where God accused Cain for the murder in his heart, before he laid hands on Abel to kill him. So doth St. John (1 John, iii. 15), "He that hateth his brother, is a murderer."

Then is there the murder of the tongue worthy of death before God not only of the body, but also of

the soul : the which is committed by a cursing, slandering, and convicious tongue. Of a cursing tongue Christ speaketh (Matt. v. 22): "He that saith to his brother, Raca, is guilty of council;" the which word, Raca, in English signifieth ill or affliction. Christ meaneth there, that he only is not a murderer, that by hand killeth his brother; but also he that curseth or desireth evil to his neighbour: as those do, that bid the pestilence on him, the fever quartan, St. Anthony's evil, or such other execrations; and they should be punished as heretics and blasphemers of God; as ye may read in Levit. (xx. 9), and Gen. (xxvii. 41): and such evil sayers have no part in the kingdom of God. He who calleth his brother, "fool," that is to say, contemneth him, inocketh him, or as men call it now-a-days, lowteth a man, committeth such murder, as is worthy of hell-fire and eternal damnation. The which vice was reprehended and so abhorred of the gentiles, that many would rather suffer death, than sustain the slanders of a pestilent tongue.

The derision of the simple, how great a sin it is, even equivalent with murder, we see by the punishment of Hain, who was so cursed of his father Noah, that his posterity suffered for his offence. "Cursed be Canaan, who shall be unto his brethren the servant of servants." (Gen. ix. 25.)

Jampson was accounted by the Philistines for a fool, but he would rather die than suffer that opprobrium unrevenged. (Judg. x. 30.) David was lowted of Michal, Saul's daughter, but she was made therefore barren all her life. (1 Sam. vi. 23.) How David revenged the contumely of his ambassadors contemned of the Amorites, read in 2 Sam. x. 7, and then thou shalt perceive that mocking is none other than murder. In the second book of the Kings (ii. 23), see how the boys mocked the

preacher of God's word, Elisha the Prophet, and how God punished the same with death more cruel than the magistrate punisheth the murderer.

Of these places we see what murder is, and how many ways it is committed. The occasion thereof is ire, anger, hatred, disdain, indignation, and such-like. We see also the pain appointed by God's laws and man's laws. But these places infer not, that it is not lawful for the magistrate to punish the evil doer with death; the father to correct his child; the master his servant; or the preachers the vice of the people.

These laws appertain unto all private persons, and not unto those to whom God hath given jurisdiction over others. Of the magistrates we have in Rom. (xiii. 4), who offend not in punishing the evil. Of the father's correction, in the Eph. (vi. 4.) Stephen called the Jews traitors and murderers (Acts, vii. 52); and Paul the Galatians fools (iii. 1); yet they offended nothing at all against this law, "Thou shalt not kill;" but served the place of their vocations, as it was commanded them by God.

Anger is no sin, so that the original thereof and the end whither it extendeth be virtuous, and it proceed with charity. Moses was angry, and brake the tables of God in his zealous and godly passion: he put the idolaters to death, but the end was to destroy vice, and to maintain virtue. So was David, so was Paul, so was Christ: but it sprang of a love towards God, and extended to a virtuous end, the punishment of vice and commendation of virtue.

CHAPTER X.

*The Seventh Commandment.**Thou shalt commit none adultery.*

That there should never fail succession and posterity to preserve the commonwealth that God hath ordained for man, as well before his fall in paradise, as after in this vale of misery; he ordained matrimony between man and woman, which is the institution and ordinance of God, appointed by the law of nature, the law of Moses, and the law of man, and the law of the Gospel. Meaning and willing this ordinance to be reverently observed of all men, he hath given this precept, that no man should dishonour, defile, or contaminate himself with any indecent or intemperate kind of life.

This is the end and purpose, why the law was given: to avoid dissolute, common, and libidinous life, with other uncleanness: to love and keep chastity and purity of life, which consisteth either in sincere virginity, or faithful matrimony, as Christ writeth. The first degree of chastity is pure virginity: the second, faithful matrimony. The same division of chastity approveth the Scripture, where Paul defineth and sheweth, that virginity is a chastity of the body, joined with the purity of the mind. These are his words: "She that is unmarried thinketh the things that be of God, how she may be holy both in body and in spirit." Of matrimony and the purity thereof, it is written: "Matrimony is honourable among all nations, and the bed unpolluted."

No man should continue in a sole life, but such as have no need of matrimony, following the word of God and ordinance of man's nature, according to the examples of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and the Apostles, which were not excluded from matrimony,

although they were ministers of the church: nor ever did they make a law to exclude their successors, but recite the matrimony of the ministers, among virtues and necessary gifts that are required in the ministers; and they called the prohibition of matrimony, the doctrine of the devil: the which the iniquity of our doctors, that defend with sword and fire the sole life of the ministers, would put from them, unto the old heretics the Tarians, who forbad matrimony to all men.

And they condemn not it, but only forbid it to the order of ecclesiastical ministers; as though they damned not matrimony, because they forbid it not to all, but to some. It is like, as if the physician should say to two men of one age, one disposition, and sick in one disease, that the medicine, that healeth the one, will kill the other. But the Scripture is against them, and also the fathers for the most part. The council of Nice condescended to the mind and sentence of Paphnutius, that said, faithful marriage was chastity, and not unto superstitious persons, that always dream some novelties to be accounted glorious. The temerity of these laws and law-makers has been godly and learnedly at all times confounded. It sufficeth us loyally and with good faith to hear this commandment, "Commit no adultery," which forbiddeth not only to abstain from another man's wife, the which both God's laws and men's laws, Christians and gentiles punish with death; but also the desire and lust of the heart. (Instit. lib. 4. *De publicis Judiciis.*)

Further, all other women are forbidden, whether it be virgin, widow, or other common woman, to transgress this commandment. The policy of Moses put to death only the man and woman married, that committed adultery. Howbeit all kinds of adultery in this precept are forbidden, as Paul writeth to the

Corinthians, where he equalleth and maketh like, fornication with adultery—read the place; and biddeth to flee fornication:—so doth he likewise the Ephesians, and saith, that the ire of God accustometh to come for such sins. Likewise we see by the punishment of fornication, and oppression of virgins, which is not inferior to adultery. The city of Sichem and the inhabitants thereof were destroyed, for the oppression of Dinah, Jacob's daughter. Judas commanded Thamar, the widow, to be put to death for dishonouring of widowhood. Phineas killed Simeï, the Israelite, with the harlot Coz, the Midianite. So that all kind of adultery is forbidden, and nothing in this case admitted, but the lawful conjunction between man and woman.

But this is not all that the precept forbiddeth: for as it forbiddeth the actual sin itself; so doth it the adultery of the heart, and of the eye, likewise the adultery of the mouth, as unchaste and filthy communication. Solomon saith, he shall burn his core, that beareth fire in his bosom; and burneth his feet that walketh upon the coals. Here is forbidden likewise the adultery of the apparel, and so consequently all excess of meat and drink, and other occasions that are inductions to this evil, and come of the concupiscence of the heart, forbidden in the Scripture.

Peter saith, the habit and apparel of women shall not be in embroidered and splaid hair, neither in laying of gold, or costly array. Ye see in our time, that many bear more upon their backs than they be worth: a woman pampered up with precious stones and gold, knotted behind and before with more pearls, than her husband and she bestow in alms all the days of their life.

Another sort, that do lack wherewithal to bestow these charges, are a dilling and burling of their hair

a longer time than a godly woman that readeth the Scripture to follow it, is in apparelling of three or four young infants. If this were only in the woman, it were less harm ; but it is also in men ; for there is not as much as he that hath but forty shillings by the year, but he is as long in the morning, to set his beard in order, as a godly craftsman would be in booming of a piece of kersey. And not only they, but also such as should give their servants an example of sobriety, as well among the clergy, as among the civil governors of the earth.

I speak not against a decent and seemly apparel of man nor woman, every person in his degree, but that each of them should avoid the excess and ill thereof that is forbidden in God's laws, and rather study to commend themselves by virtues, than to be esteemed by their apparel. Thus doth not God only, but also ethnics teach, as Cicero, lib. x. Officiorum. Such a means should be kept in apparel (saith Cicero), that should not be too gaudy, nor too filthy, but such as might avoid a rude and beastly negligence.

In Matthew we see how Christ interpreteth this precept, not only to avoid the evil itself, but also the occasions of it, saying, " If thine eye and right hand offend thee, cast them off." Where Christ sheweth, that there is no occasion that can excuse adultery or fornication. As this sin has degrees in itself, as ye see and may perceive by the pains rehearsed ; so is it more offence in one person than in the other ; more in age than in youth, more in the magistrate or prince than in private persons, more in the teacher of God's word than in the hearer.

And as the condition of the persons aggravates the offence, so should justice aggravate the punishment thereof, and not to punish the one, and let the other go. There is no man more privileged than the other. As justice is executed against the infe-

rior, so should it be against the superior; for as the one is subject to the law of God, so is the other.

There is another kind of adultery forbidden in this precept, which Christ speaketh of in Matthew; which is unlawful divorcement of matrimony, where the man putteth away the woman, or the woman the man, for unlawful causes.

The same authority hath the woman to put away the man, that the man hath to put away the woman. Christ saith, there is no lawful cause to dissolve matrimony, but adultery. For when the woman giveth the use of her body to another man, she is no more her first husband's wife; nor the husband any longer the husband of his wife, than he observeth the faith of matrimony with her. Wheresoever this fault happen, and can be proved by certain signs and lawful testimonies, the persons may by the authority of God's word and ministry of the magistrates be separated so one from the other, that it shall be lawful for the man to marry another wife, and the wife to marry another husband. So that the man shall not need to keep at home with him a woman that is no more his, than another man's; neither the woman such an husband, as is no more hers than another woman's.

Of these few words uncharitably construed (good Christian reader), there has by ignorant and lascivious persons much controversy risen between many men: not by such as be able to judge and give sentence in the matter; but by those, that neither have seen my work, that they might with knowledge have condemned it, or with charity have sought with communication, or writing, to have solicited me to a recantation and condemnation of my judgment in this behalf; and by such as use will for reason, and spite for charity.

Wherefore seeing my work will oftentimes be

imprinted, as my friend the printer adviseth me ; I thought good to strengthen and succour this my true doctrine, grounded upon God's word, with such helps as I may help, and warrant the same by the word of God ; most humbly praying mine adversaries in the blood and passion of Christ, not to condemn me nor my book of affection ; but either to answer me and my book with disputation, where, and before whom they will ; so they be subject to God's word, and to the censure and judgment of the holy and catholic church ; whose judgment and learning hath and doth defend my learning and sentence in this behalf : or charitably to write unto me, that I may learn (as God knoweth I most desire) wherefore to amend and revoke this my learning so uncharitably condemned.

And I do by this my last addition and maintenance of my first doctrine, protest and declare unto all the world, that my first doctrine in this question is, and shall be for evermore true. And I will stand to the defence thereof, when and where it shall please the magistrates to appoint, with the danger of God's displeasure, and theirs ; to whom I bear obedience, fear, and love, according to my most bountiful duty. Wherefore, my friend, of friendship be not too friendly, to favour me too much ; nor thou, my enemy, of enmity condemn me not too soon. Hear now my defence, I beseech thee ; and judge of knowledge, as thou wouldst be judged, how I defend the innocency of my cause, forced thereto by thine occasion and uncharitable slanders ; that wouldst defame thou knowest not what, or win the victory thou knowest not when.

This is now to help my first doctrine by the word of God upon the divorcement, that I have written. But seeing the divorcement cannot be understood, what it is, nor when it is lawful, except men know

first what matrimony is; what is the dignity thereof, and how it should be contracted; I will by the way shew what matrimony is. And note it, I pray thee, that thou mayest answer for me, whether I judge contrary or besides the word of God on divorcement between man and woman.

Matrimony is a lawful union of man and woman to be one flesh, to bring forth children, or to avoid fornication.

Out of this definition may be gathered the dignity, and also the beginning of matrimony.

First I say, matrimony is a lawful union of one man and one woman. And by this first part of matrimony be excluded all whoredoms, adulteries, and unlawful connexions of men and women, contrary to the law of God and the law of nature. And where he saith, "in one flesh," it is to say, the husband shall keep himself for the wife only, and the wife herself for the husband only; so is excluded that foolish and carnal opinion that saith, a man may have two, three, or more wives, and the wife as many husbands.

Secondly, the ends of matrimony be two; the first for the procreation of children, that they might be the preservers of true and godly religion, by whom God's word might be set forth, when the parents be dead: as ye may see by the history of Tobit and Isaac. And here be condemned as many as seek riches, honours, or any other like vain things of this world, before virtue; also such as care not of what religion their wives be, neither how their children be brought up.

The other end of matrimony is to avoid fornication. Seeing the Lord made man to be a creature, prone and ready to associate himself unto another sex and kind like to himself; as God said, "It is not good that the man be alone:" lest there should be any

unlawful connexion, God did institute and command matrimony; to all such as after the fall of Adam were in danger of forming sinful connexions. By the which institution and commandment they be condemned, that for poverty, foolish vows, or for easiness of life avoid and refuse matrimony, yet tarry in the mean season in the danger of sin through concupiscence.

Wherefore the Lord approveth this to be Christian matrimony, where the man and woman consent lawfully in the fear of the Lord, to live in love and chastity, that they may bring forth, and bring up their children in the fear of the Lord. But this matrimony is contemned now-a-days, which provoketh the ire of God: for three manner of ways men offend in this behalf. First, men woo and covet matrimony for affection. Then be they well conjoined together of their own consent; yet their parents' and fathers' good will either is neglected, or miraculously blinded, rather with the respect of honour and riches, than well persuaded for estimation of virtue.

And so, being thus conjoined, there is brought forth the fruits of ungodly and unadvised matrimony; to wit, discord and debate. Whereof springeth the customable and ungodly divorcement, which might be avoided, if men would use but this only remedy: if they would, as Isaac and Tobit did, first pray unto the Lord, and then have rather respect unto the man's and woman's virtues, than to their riches. Thirdly, when they be conjoined together, that one bear godlily with the other's conditions, and know their states, the man to be the head, and the woman glad to acknowledge the pre-eminence and superiority without disdain for the ordinances of God.

But seeing these circumstances be seldom and rarely observed, many divorces happen more than should be, or can be lawful. Christ putteth only

one cause of divorcement, fornication. Therefore to speak of divorcement, as we have of matrimony, well will take it from its definition and nature, which is this.

True divorcement is a separation and departing of man and wife from the bonds and law of matrimony, for the breaking of the faith and promise of matrimony, which made the man and wife, two in one flesh. I will not intreat of other causes of divorcement than fornication, because my book makes no mention of any other.

But I will come to the state of all the controversy between my contraries and me, whether it be lawful for a woman upon due and sufficient circumstances to put away her husband, an adulterer; as the man may put away his wife, upon the same circumstances, being an adulteress and harlot. Of this controversy mark, gentle reader, the resolution and answer, and mark without affection; so shalt thou please God, instruct thy conscience, and not offend me thy friend; and brother in Christ.

First, it is known to all men, that it is lawful for the man to put away his wife for fornication: for such a fault breaketh the knot of matrimony. The same also for the wife, as it may be thus proved. First, that the man breaketh as well the bonds of matrimony, by giving himself up to an harlot, as the woman by giving herself up to the adulterer: so that the law of reason admitteth the lawful union of two to be one, and disalloweth the violation of the same as well in the man as in the woman.

Then Christ, in the cause of divorcement for fornication equalleth and maketh alike both the man and the woman's cause in the respect of adultery. Read the place, and note it, for there he giveth the same authority to the woman for fornication, that he giveth to the man.

Thirdly, the civil law admitteth and licenseth the same; read Eusebius (lib. iv.), and tell me, whether thou have an example or not of a woman that put away her husband for fornication.

But they object, and first out of the old law, that it was not lawful for a woman to put away her husband, but the man might put away his wife. I grant the same, but I am sure the poor woman was not compelled to live with her adulterous husband; for the law commanded such a villain to be slain, and so put the honest party at liberty; and so should it now-a-days, and then the question of divorce-ment and of marrying another, Christ is plain; where he giveth equal power, as well to the man as to the woman, and to the woman as well as to the man.

Then say they again; Yea, but the man is the head of the woman. Hereof infer they some privilege and pre-eminence to appertain unto man, that is denied and taken from the woman. True it is, and no man denieth, the man to be the head of the woman, as long as they be one flesh, and very matrimony remaineth between them both; or else the husband is the member of an harlot, and not the head of his wife: and the wife, the whore and adulteress of an adulterer, and not the true wife of her husband; after that the fault of adultery is known, proved, and condemned by the word of God and the judgment of the magistrate, as is aforesaid.

Yet object they again, if it should be lawful for the woman to make a divorce with her husband; marriage could never be sure nor constant, for women should change still at their pleasures. I answer, that there is given no such liberty to man or woman by the word of God; no honest man or honest woman will seek any such liberty, but rather fear the Lord, and wish, that neither they themselves, nor any

other, should need this permission and liberty of God's word to be granted.

Further, I dispute not of the fact, but of the law itself; whether the fact being done, as I have spoken before, may be suffered and accounted lawful or not. Also I would not that divorcement should be lightly, or at the will of every man or woman, done, but would all these things to be observed.

First, I would that both the man for his part, and the woman likewise for her part, should not for any affection seek occasions, or false suspicions, neither yet credit every slanderous tongue.

Then, if it happen, that either of them find their companion culpable and guilty, to attempt all manner of means, secretly between them both, to amend the fault: if that avail not, to solicit the same by honest arbiters and godly friends; and in the mean time, the innocent party to pray diligently unto God for the party that is in the lapse.

Thirdly, if none of these means profit, then to appeal unto the magistrates, who be bound to punish the adulterer, or the adulteress, and so to set the man or the woman civilly in the world at liberty, as the crime and fault hath already sundered them before God. For as the congregation and magistrates be testimonies and judges of the matrimony, when two persons are coupled together lawfully; so be they testimonies and judges of the separation which is granted for the unlawful violating of matrimony. Neither doth the magistrate dissolve what God hath bound, nor discouple what God hath coupled, but the judges of the adultery and unlawful fact, that hath of itself before dissolved what God conjoined. Thus seest thou (good reader) that I give no license nor liberty to diminish the dignity of matrimony, nor ever will, by God's grace.

St. Paul sheweth another cause of divorcement,

when one of the persons being married is an infidel, and of a contrary faith. If this person will not dwell with the other, that is his fellow in matrimony, and a Christian; it is lawful to break the faith of matrimony, and marry with another. So saith St. Ambrose, writing in the same place of St. Paul; the reverence of matrimony is not due unto him, that condemneth the authority of matrimony. And in the same place; "The contempt of God breaketh the right of matrimony concerning him that is forsaken, lest he should be accused, being married to another."

Thou seest, that the Lord giveth license for adultery to divorce and marry again; and St. Paul for infidelity. The divorce that the bishops permit in their laws, is no divorce, but only the name of it: for they will not permit these persons thus divorced to marry again. They say, what God hath conjoined, man should not separate. Who denieth that? God speaketh of the woman that standeth by the law and ordinance of God, being lawfully married, and who doth the office of a wife.

If adultery or the case of infidelity chance, man dissolveth not the matrimony, but the person's self that offendeth, and the magistrate is but a testimony of his or her evil fact, that hath broken and dissolved that that God coupled, and protesteth to the world that they, thus dissolved, may marry again, notwithstanding the former marriage. Though man's laws admit it not, God's laws do, whose words may not be wrested out of tune, but always applied unto the end they were spoken.

The pharisees demanded of Christ, whether it were lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause, and to marry another, as all those had done in the time of Moses. Christ answered directly to this question, and said, it was not lawful for a man to

put away his wife, and marry another; except she committed adultery. Then and for that cause it is lawful now in the time of the Gospel, as it was in Moses' law. But for the frowardness of conditions, or tediousness of manners, men should not separate their wives, neither from bed, nor from board; much less marry another. He or she that cannot with wisdom amend the displeasing and crooked manners of his or her mate, must patiently bear them; remembering, if Christ command us to be of such a tolerancy and patience to endure the obloquies and injuries of all men, though they be our enemies; how much more the morosity and injuries of a domestic companion? A hard cross; but patience must lighten it, till God send a redress.

Christ yet speaketh of another adultery, which those commit, that marry at one time two wives, and say; if a man have an hundred (as he may have as well as two), yet all be but two, and one flesh in the Lord.

Christ doth not so interpret two, but referreth two to one man, and one woman, as the text that he allegeth out of Gen. declareth, saying, "Have ye not read, that He that made them from the beginning, made them male and female; therefore shall man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and shall be two in one flesh." The text admitteth no pluralities of wives, but destroyeth in plain the sentence of those that defend the conjunction of many wives with one man.

For as, at the beginning of matrimony, there was but one man and one woman created and married together; so now no more should there be in one matrimony; as Christ there teacheth, and expoundeth, "two in one flesh:" the word of God must be followed, and not the example of the fathers in this case. It is also forbidden by man's laws, saying, "It

is commonly known, that no man being under the jurisdiction of Rome can have two wives;" say the emperors Dioclesian and Maximianus.

St. Paul (1 Cor. vii.) giveth a godly precept, if it were godly used; read the chapter at the beginning; the conclusion of the sentence is thus, speaking unto the persons married; "Depart not the one from the other, except it be for consent for a time, to apply to fasting and praying, and then come together again, lest the devil tempt you for your intemperancy." If Paul could do any thing with men that be married, they would not for their pleasures, or private lucre, make so many voyages out of their countries, or within their countries, leaving their wives, children, and households, as forsaken orphans. How light soever this ungodly people make their gaddings or peregrinations, they shall be culpable and accountable for as many faults, as are done by their families through their absence and negligence, before God. How this sin of adultery is punished appeareth in the Scriptures. (Gen. xii. 17, and xix. 24.) Look not how man useth now to punish it, that rather accounteth it a virtue than a vice; but see what punishment God appointeth for it in the Scripture.

CHAPTER XI.

The Eighth Commandment.

Thou shalt not steal.

This eighth law extendeth to this end, that we give unto every man that that is his. And in so doing, we resemble the Master of this law. God Almighty, that abhorreth all injustice, and loveth equity and right. As here is forbidden to steal the goods of others, so is there commanded and required to employ diligence in keeping the goods that be our own; remembering that every man receiveth at

God's hand his goods and the parcels thereof, and not by fortune, or his own travail. Therefore to abuse them is not only the loss of the goods, but also injury unto the dispensation of God, who willet the rich to give gladly, and with thanks, unto the poor; and the poor to receive religiously, as out of the treasury of the Lord, with humble thanksgiving; the rich to exercise his faith in giving, and to think that the way to be rich is not to muck up in the coffer, but to be liberal, and to put out much to the poor, for the commandment's sake, and think the promise of God will send it again: the poor to exercise his faith in receiving, when, although he hath nothing at home, yet God hath opened the heart of one or other to give him his necessities, and that always God is faithful to his promise, and will give bread to the hungry at all times opportune.

This law principally forbiddeth all injuries that afflict or diminish the riches, faculties, glory, estimation, fame, and all other things expedient for body and soul; all actions and traverse of the law, that might be ended charitably without breach of love; and all other uncharitable expenses, all violent and forcible oppressions by night or day, as well of them that rob with the hand by the highway side, as of them that by counsel, affection, avarice, hatred, or by request of letters invert and pervert justice.

Likewise all fraud and guile in buying and selling, and breaking of promise in all bargains and contracts; or when there is taken from the law, that which is hers: that is to say, when she taketh execution and punishment of one ill doer, and not of another, not because their causes differ or be unlike, but that she is robbed by force of her justice, by the unjust person and judges, that judge not by the law, but against the law. As this robbery of justice is used commonly against God's laws and man's, so hath it obtained a

common soothsaying amongst all people: "He giveth pardon to the ravens, and oppresseth the doves with exaction." The sentence meaneth, that the great thieves and robbers are at liberty, and sometimes occupy the seat of justice, when the little thieves are hanged. He is not only a thief, that by day robbeth, and breaketh men's houses by night, but also those that by any means let the thing to be paid that is due, whether it be to the law, or to those that be under the law. Two manners of ways all injuries and wrongs are done: the one by withholding the other's right, and the other in taking away another's right.

The things unjustly withholden, are the goods of the body, or of the mind. Of the body are these; the husband, the wife, the children, the servants, the patrons, and the pupils; money, ware, and all such other things as are used in the life of man necessary for the body. If these things be truly gotten, the owner must godly use them to his glory, and to the profit of his neighbour. If they be gotten with fraud, guile, and deceit, keep them not, for they be none of thine; restore them to the right owner, or else it is theft, and no man can dispense with thee for them, though thou shrive thyself to the priest, and cause all the masses in the world to be said for thee, or (if thou be delivered from that superstition), boast of the Gospel never so much.

Let them, that trade the course of merchandise in their vocation, beware of this danger. Such as have the cure of souls beware, they hold not their stipends, and deserve them not. Such as be servants, that they eat not their masters' bread, and receive their wages, for nought. As for those men that give their wages to such as live an evil unoccupied life, as the most part of the nobility do now-a-days; it is against God's laws to keep any such in their house, for they maintain idleness, which is forbidden, and the servant

that receiveth it, committeth theft, for he is commanded to labour with his hands to feed himself and others. Though it be used by princes, potentates, and all men of the world, yet that excuseth not the fault before God : for it was never read in the law of God, nor in the law of any man that had knowledge in a commonwealth, that an ill man was accounted as any member thereof, as ye may read in Plato and Aristotle, what persons be meet to dwell in a commonwealth. How unruly a sort of people the evil men be, thou mayst see by the writing of Cicero, when the empire of Rome fell out with itself by sedition. No man should retain the wages of his servants, but satisfy always his covenant.

Further they offend against this law of God, that by force or violence, fraud, or any other way, unjustly withhold and keep any man's child or servants, as those do that by force or fraud marry any man's child against the will of his parents.

Such as have great forests or parks of deer or conies, that pasture and feed upon their neighbours' ground, or columbaries where doves assemble and haunt, and those fed of the poor's corn ; I refer it to the charity of every man whether the keeping of such beasts be not against God's laws and man's laws, and whether it be not sufficient, rather for a few men's pleasure, than for many men's profit.

If any man should kill any of these beasts, it were felony in many places : whereas the law civil calleth those wild beasts the goods of the owner, no longer than they abide at home, or have a purpose to return home, which will never be as long as they find good bait in the poor man's pasture or corn, except they be chased home : whether those beasts be not as well the poor man's, if he can take them in his pasture, as the owner's ; read the law. I cannot tell with what good conscience any man can fare well with

the detriment of his neighbour : let every man judge with charity, whether it be well done or not.

As it is sin to retain unjustly these goods of the body, whether they be ours or other men's, so it is to retain the goods of the mind ; as good counsel, learning, wisdom, or any other thing else, that may aid our brother in things of religion and virtue : and as every man that seeth his brother in want of things necessary for the body, in case he help him not, hath no charity in him, as John saith ; so he that seeth his brother want the knowledge of God and good counsel, in case he aid him not the best he can, is culpable of his brother's damnation.

The other part that concerneth the transgression against this law, is in taking away another man's right or goods, which goods likewise be of the body, or of the soul. Of the body, as I rehearsed before ; which are taken away by force or violence secretly or openly ; as by thieves, pirates, and others, that against God's laws and man's laws spoil and rob. Likewise such as war in the defence of any commonwealth ; and under the pretence of warfare, think all spoils and rapes to be lawful ; as those do, that under the name of justice commit unpunished all injustice. Such as by fraud and craft in buying and selling, making of bargains or other contracts, deceive any man, are condemned by this law of theft ; as those that sell wares that be naughty or corrupted, for things lawful ; the things that be good for more than they be worth ; which use not their craft to profit many, but for their own private commodity.

Of this avarice come usury, fraud, false contracts, breaking of faith and promises, contempt of all truth and honesty, forestalling and ingrossing of markets, compacts and agreements between the rich, that things may not be sold as they be worth, but as their avarice hath agreed upon. This maketh scarcity

of all things, and robbeth the poor members of every commonwealth, and bringeth high the greater part of such commodities as be in every realm into a few rich men's hands, so that they cannot be sold as common goods of the civil wealth, but as the goods of one private person, the which monopoly or selling of one man is forbidden, not only in the law of God, but also in the law of man, and under a great pain, forfeiting his own goods, and to be condemned to perpetual exile or banishment. Justinian saw well, that when one only bought, because only he might sell again, it was not profitable, but hurtful, to the commonwealth.

As it is in buying and selling of things moveable forbidden to use fraud, so is it in the goods of the earth unmoveable; as lands, houses, and possessions, which now in a manner are only the goods of the rich, and so enhanced, that the poor man cannot get as much as a cottage to put himself, his wife and his children in, which crieth vengeance in the ears of the God of battle. See the curse of God against those insatiable raveners, and eaters of the poor: yet when they have altogether, and suffer not the poor to have either house nor rent, they will occupy yet all crafts and trades of buying and selling, that the poor man shall have neither goods nor handicraft to help himself withal. How do these men hear or read the word of God, that biddeth them give their own goods to the poor; which neither give their own, nor suffer them to buy at a reasonable price the thing that is not theirs?

The emperors Honorius and Theodosius gave other laws for their commonwealths, writing in this manner: "Such as be of noble parentage, and bear rule in the commonwealth, and are rich by patrimony, we forbid to exercise buying and selling: which is hurtful to cities;" that among the common sort of

people and occupiers, the trade of buying and selling might be more easy or common. This faculty and trade of merchandise that now is used for avarice, was invented for a good purpose, to communicate such things as were necessary for the life of man, and not to the use that now it is applied to. Such as God hath given good unto, or possessions of the world, should live upon the same; and he that hath one craft to live by, should not occupy two, for fear of doing wrong to his neighbour.

As for usury, and applying of money or any thing else to an unreasonable gain, it is none other than theft. I would men should rather refrain from giving of money to gain altogether, than break the law of charity, that helpeth without looking for gain, because usury is plain forbidden. The laws and constitutions of the magistrates civil admit certain gain and usury: though they be in many things scarce to be borne withal, yet I would they were well observed; but such is our time, that every man is in this case a law to himself, and taketh what he can.

Here are forbidden also all games for money, as dice, cards, and others, which are very theft, and against charity, that should rather augment his neighbour's goods, than make them less.

Also the diminution of any man's fame; as when for vain glory any man attributeth unto himself the wit or learning that another brain hath brought forth, whereof many have complained; they make a fair show with another bird's feathers, as Æsop's crow did.

Such as are appointed to be common and public receivers, that twice ask the thing due of the people, once for themselves, and once for the Lord: or such as bear office, to see the treasure of a commonwealth preserved, and augmented as it need with the revenues that belong to the same; as receivers, auditors, treasurers, paymasters, with others, commit

more than theft, if they use any part of the goods belonging to a commonwealth to a private use, and cause the superior magistrates to charge their subjects with a new exaction ; which should not need to be done, if all things paid by the people were truly brought home, and faithfully laid up to the use they were gathered for.

A greater theft yet is it to constrain any person that is free, to do any thing against his liberty, as many times the father doth his son ; sell him as a bond-man, and marry him where he list, and to whom he list.

Thus offend likewise they that persuade any man's child to forsake his parents, or any servants their master : this is punished in the law with death or exile. " It is also theft to oppress any just cause, that is in controversy, by force, affection, or authority of any superior power, or request by letters, not only against God's laws, but also against man's laws." Where by these words, the godly and most prudent prince, our father Claudius, godly decreed, that those should lose their suit, that obtained the help of noblemen ; that by this fear all causes of controversy might be used indifferently, rather than to depend on the estimation of any superior power. If this theft were avoided, poor men's causes should find more grace, and rich men's consciences more virtue ; especially the judges that forget what places they be in, and serve the world more than God.

How devilish and great an offence it is before God, thus to corrupt justice, they may learn of David : " God sitteth, or is present, in the senate or place of judgment." (Psa. lxxxii.) This Psalm all judges should learn by heart, and practise it ; likewise mark the second verse of the same Psalm, that saith thus : " How long will ye judge perversely, and corrupt justice at the request of the evil ?" In the end of

is verse is a word in Hebrew, Selah, the which of the Hebricians is diversely interpreted ; but to pass her over meanings, wheresoever thou read it, think there is in the same verse some special and notable thing to be marked. In this verse Selah here signifieth as much in English as though David had said : " Oh, how great offence is it before God, to pervert any man's request justice !" Or else David put this word Selah there, as though he had said : " It is a common fault and accustomed manner of judges to have respect of persons in judgment." The Psalm containeth but eight verses ; the judges may therefore learn them, and the better bear them in mind.

The greatest thievery of all is sacrilege, in robbing of the goods appointed to an holy use. Such are the goods appointed for the poor, for the maintenance of schools to bring up youth in, in such learning as shall be necessary for the ministry of the church, and governance of the commonwealth. In taking from the ministers the condition and goods whereupon they live, who should by God's laws honestly be provided for by the heads of the commonwealth ; this is a horrible offence to take these goods away from the godly use they be appointed to. So it is the like offence to enjoy them undeserved ; as those do, that have hospitals, spitals, and other such alms appointed for the poor, and apply it to their own use, whereby which crieth vengeance before God.

Also those, that are appointed in colleges or schools to learn or teach for the stipends they receive, if they do not their office, commit sacrilege.

Such as live of spiritual tithes, pensions, lands, or other goods appointed to teach the people the word of God, and minister his holy sacraments, in neglecting their office and duty offend in the same offence ; or when one man (and such a one often chan-

ceth) doth not, or cannot do half a man's office for such a place, yet hath many men's livings.

But of whatsoever gifts he be of, he should not have two men's livings, which the bishops' laws admit by pluralities and totquots. But this is, "Claw me, and I will claw thee." If the bishops permitted not their priests to have two benefices, it might fortune the priest would likewise say, "The bishop should be bishop of one city;" and indeed so it should be: and until the magistrates bring them to that point, it shall be as possible to hear a bishop wade godly and simply through the Scripture in a case of religion, as to drive a camel through the eye of a needle.

A great pity it is to see, how far that office of a bishop is degenerated from the original in the Scripture: it was not so at the beginning, when bishops were at the best, as the Epistle of Paul to Titus testifieth, that willed him to ordain in every city of Crete a bishop. And in case there were such love in them now, as was then towards the people, they would say themselves, there were more to do for the best of them in one city, than he could do. They know that the primitive church had no such bishops as be now-a-days, as examples testify, until the time of Silvester the First. A little and a little riches crept so into the church, that men sought more hire than the wealth of the people; and so increased within few years, that bishops became princes, and princes were made servants: so that they have set them up with their alms and liberality in so high honour, that they cannot pluck them down again with all the force they have.

What blindness is there befallen in the world, that cannot see this palpable ill, that our mother, the holy church, had at the beginning such bishops as did preach many godly sermons in less time, than our

bishops' horses be a-bridling; their household was the school or treasure-house of good ministers, to serve the word of God, and ministrations of the sacraments. If it be so now, let every indifferent man judge. The magistrates, that suffer the abuse of these goods, be culpable of the fault. If the fourth part of the bishopric remain under the bishop, it were sufficient; the third part, to such as teach good learning; the second part, to the poor of the diocese; and the other, to maintain men of war for the safeguard of the commonwealth; it were better bestowed a great deal: for it is now ill used and bestowed, for the greater part, upon those that have no need of it, or else upon such ill men, as should be maintained with no man's goods.

It were well done to provide for such, as by ill bringing up cannot now otherwise live, and provide such means, that they hereafter no more offend in that kind of life. If any man be offended with me for my thus saying, he loveth not his own health, nor God's laws, nor man's, out of which I am always ready to provide the thing said to be true: further I speak it of love, and of no hatred.

The Acts of the Apostles do shew, that in the primitive church, such as were converted unto Christ, used a singular liberality towards the poor; and likewise other writers, namely, St. Austin, that many men were found rich in Rome, when it was taken by the Goths; and again within fourteen years after by Genseric, the king of Vandals. But they were rich for the poor, and not for themselves, or such as were rich. And he maketh mention of one Paulinus, the bishop of Nola, a city in Campania, who was exceeding rich, but for the poor, as our bishops should be, that now apply the best part of their bishoprics to a prodigal use in their own house; or in

large fees and gifts, hospitality, and other benevolences upon the rich.

Let all men, yea themselves (affection put apart, and the love or study of many), judge in this case, whether ever they read in the New Testament, or have any one godly bishop in the primitive church for an example, that used the goods of the Holy Ghost, the riches of the poor, the possessions given for the preservation of godly doctrine, and the ministry of the church, as they do. If it seem good unto the higher powers, that this ill be tolerable, and borne withal, for the honour of the realm, and doing of such expeditions as shall be expedient for them to do, when they be commanded; their honours know right well, that nothing commendeth a realm more than where every man in his degree is as rich as the Scriptures of God permit; and that bishop doth most honour unto the realm, that keepeth his household, and disposeth the same according to the form and rule of the word of God.

As for such expeditions in the civil wealth, as should be committed unto these ministers of the church, the common treasure-house should bear it; they should be reasonably provided for, and the rest and overplus taken from them, and put to some other godly use. Look upon the Apostles chiefly, and upon all their successors for the space of four hundred years, and then thou shalt see godly bishops, and such as diligently applied that painful office of a bishop to the glory of God, and honour of the realms they dwell in. Though they had not so much upon their heads as our bishops have; yet had they more within their heads, as the Scriptures and histories testify. For they applied all their wit they had unto the vocation and ministry of the church, whereunto they were called: our bishops have no

such wit : they can rule and serve, as they say, in both states ; in the church, and also in the civil policy.

When one of them is more than any man is able to satisfy, let him do always his best diligence. If he be so necessary for the court, that in civil causes and giving of good counsel he cannot be spared, let him use that vocation, and leave the other : for it is not possible, he should do both well. And a great oversight of the princes and higher powers of the earth, thus to charge them with two burdens, when none of them is able to bear the least of them both. They be the king's subjects, and meet for his majesty to choose the best for his court that be of the realm, but then they must be kept in their vocation to preach only the word of God, and not to put themselves, or be appointed by others, to do things that belong to a bishop's vocation.

This is theft of such goods as appertain unto the body.

There is another kind, of the soul, as when the ministers give not unto such, as be committed unto their charge, the word of God, simply and plainly in a tongue known, and lead not the people towards the life everlasting, as the word of God teacheth, to know that for Christ's sake only, without all respect of works, sin is forgiven, and that we are bound to do the works that God commandeth us to do, and be expressed in the Scripture, which is the rule to lead the church by.

Such as preach man's laws and works, not commanded in the Scripture, rob the Scripture of her riches.

Likewise those that attribute more than is due, or less than is due, unto the holy sacraments instituted by Christ, commit sacrilege.

They take from the sacraments too much, that

say, they be but external signs, to know the church of Christ by, from such as be not of the church ; as the Roman once was known from another citizen by his gown : also those that say they may be done and left undone, as it pleaseth man that useth them.

Those add too much to the sacraments that attribute as much unto them as unto the grace and promise that they confirm ; as to the sacrament of baptism, remission of sin, when it is but an external confirmation of it. And unto the holy supper of the Lord they attribute a distribution, deliverance, or exhibition of Christ's natural body ; whereas it is but a confirmation of grace and mercy, that he bought for us upon the cross, with shedding his precious blood, and the death of his innocent body : as the words shew plainly, where Christ saith, he did not institute his last supper that men should bodily eat his body, but that they should do always the same, in the remembrance of his death, and consider the grace that he obtained for us in his body and blood, and be thankful for the same.

Great pity it is that the devil hath so prevailed in many men, that obstinately without reason and authority of the Scripture, they preach their fantasies unto the people of God, and would persuade them that their imagination or dream of Christ's holy body were the true and substantial body : but such is the devil's malice. Now that many men are persuaded, that the substance of bread remaineth, and they can no longer deceive them in sensible things, he carrieth them to as great an ill or worse than that, and would make them believe that a fantasy or dream of a body, that hath neither quantity or quality, is a true body. My good reader, without all affection consider the reasons and authority of God's word, that I shall rehearse here briefly against those thieves, that rob

the humanity of Christ of all human qualities and quantities.

First, they judge the body of Christ; that is in heaven, to have all the properties and conditions of a true man; and from the self-same body in the sacrament they take away all the conditions and qualities of a true man's body: They must shew by the Scripture, that one and the same body, Jesus of Nazareth, the Seed of the Holy Virgin, perfect God; perfect man, consisting of man's flesh, and a reasonable soul, hath and hath not, at one and the same time, a body with all dimensions, qualities, and quantities of a true man in heaven, and without all dimensions, qualities, and quantities, at the same time in the sacrament.

This thou must put as a pillar and foundation of thy faith, that as he is a perfect God, with all the properties and conditions of a true God wheresoever he be: so he is a perfect man, with all the qualities of a true man, wheresoever he be, consisting of a reasonable soul, and man's flesh. They say, thou must not judge so carnally and grossly of Christ's body. Believe thou the Scripture, and bid them shew thee the place in the Scripture, that thou shouldest not judge so of a true physical and mathematical body, which Christ now hath, as the fingers of St. Thomas bear record, the hands and eyes of all the Apostles, and also his ascension, bear record. Let them prove what they speak by the Scripture, and shew where Christ was ever present in one place, visible; and in another place present at the same time, invisible.

They say, we must speak as the Scripture speaketh, that saith by the bread: "This is my body;" and of these few words ill understood, they dream wonderful mysteries, that the substantial body of Christ's humanity is present, by miracle and a way

celestial, passing all men's capacities, with many other far-fetched imaginations and new-found terms, which the Scripture never knew of. Howbeit, if thou mark their conclusion, thou shalt find nothing but the name of a body, which they have given to this chimera and monster that their fantasy hath conceived. They speak of the letter, and none go further from it than they. Christ said: "This is my body that is betrayed for you," the which was a visible and sensible body, as the eyes of those that saw him hang upon the cross testify. They say, it is an invisible body, that occupieth not place; but the Scripture saith the contrary, as thou seest by the words of the supper.

Hold then therefore by the Scripture fast, and when they do name the most holy humanity of Christ, and would have it to be with the bread, bid them shew thee the body. For the text saith, that he shall come as visible unto us, as he departed from us. If they say, that place speaketh of his coming to judgment, and not of his presence in the sacrament, deny their saying; for the text saith, that he shall be in heaven, till that time of judgment.

It is ill done of any man to speak as the Scripture speaketh, and not to take the meaning of the Scripture. God for his mercy sake give men grace to know the truth. Before Christ in his supper called the bread his body, see how he foresaw this after evil and fantastical dream, that men would take his words contrary unto the mind. In the sixth of John he telleth his disciples, that to eat his body, was to believe in him. That availed not; but straightway he said; "The words that I speak be spirit and life;" and so called them from the letter. Yet again, the third time in the same place he saith; "What if ye see the Son of Man ascend where he was first?" By these reasons he took away all bodily eating, and rigour of the letter.

Likewise after the supper, lest they should dream yet of a bodily presence, because sacramentally he called the bread his body, he repeated again the same words: "It is expedient that I depart." Again: "I go to my Father. I came from my Father into the world. I forsake the world again, and go to my Father." Why should not these places hold their authority, and teach us to understand these words: "This is my body:" seeing that both before and after the supper, Christ told them by plain words, he would not be in the world. And so doth the institution of it declare, that this sacrament was and should be a memorial of his blessed passion and the pains suffered in the flesh, and not a distribution of the flesh itself. None of them that put this corporal presence in the bread, yet hitherto ever could interpret the words of the Scripture aright. I would be glad to hear it once.

If they will not admit the alteration of the bread with the Papists, they will, and can do none otherwise, but to interpret the words thus: "This is my body;" that is to say, very bread, and my body, and refer the verb (is) to two diverse substances, to the body of Christ, and to the bread, which is plain against the nature of a verb substantive, to be at once two diverse substances.

Seeing St. Paul (Rom. iv. 11) doth interpret and expound this word (is) in the sacrament of circumcision, and all sacraments be of one nature, by this word, "signifieth, or confirmeth:" what should men mean, thus to trouble and vex the church of Christ with new doctrine? Also, it is a common manner of the Scripture, to attribute unto the sign, the thing meant by the sign. God knoweth what a weak reason this is to say, people must speak as the Scripture doth, and would derive therefrom a real and bodily presence of our Saviour, that died for us,

and ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God Almighty, and from thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Did not Arius defend his heresy with as good an agreement as this, when he spake as the Scripture doth, and said, "My Father is greater than I?" Or might not a man prove by the same reason Elias, Isaiah, and the other prophets before Christ came, to be deceivers of the people, and false preachers, because Christ said; "As many as come before me were thieves and murderers?" yet, he that speaketh thus, speaketh as the Scripture speaketh. There is not, or ever was (Christian reader), heretic but spake in defence of his heresy, as the Scripture speaketh; but took not the meaning with the word, as we must do, except we intend to rob the holy Scripture of her true sense, and ungodly force the letter from the true meaning thereof: as those do, that rather constrain the unlearned conscience with fear, than persuade them with good arguments out of the Scripture.

They intricate the wits of men with sophistry and illusion, that they know not what they hear, neither they themselves what they say, when the oration is ended. For a true body, they shew a blank, or rather fantasy of body: and all their words have brought forth nothing less than a body, that they promised to deliver unto him that they would persuade.

They say, he, that doth not believe their words, that they have a true body, with, "This is my body," was never well persuaded of the first article of his faith; "I must believe, that God is omnipotent." So we do. But with this reason they subvert themselves, because ye see in the sacrament God doth not make the thing they speak, and therefore it is not there; for if he would that it should be, it must be a man's body with all the qualities thereof, for Christ hath

none other body, but that which he took of the holy Virgin, and is always visible and subject unto the senses wheresoever it be.

When they trouble thee with the words of the supper (This is my body), return unto all the sacraments of the Old Testament, and thou shalt find, that they were the confirmation of the things they were called, and not the thing itself. Then look upon other places of the Scripture, believe thy *Credo*; "he ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

Wilt thou not believe all these places, as well as the dream of them that choke thee with one place of the Scripture ill understood? Let those untractable men judge what they list of the sacrament and holy supper of the Lord; believe thou with the Scripture, that it is but a memory of Christ's death, a confirmation and mystery of our redemption. Luke saith, "Do it in the memory of me;" and lest any man should say, that memory is to receive the corporal body of Christ, St. Paul interpreteth it plainly, and saith; "The eating of the bread, and drinking of the wine, is done to shew the death and passion of Christ's body, till he come."

We must therefore in this kind of theft, and all others, study to make restitution, and to pay every man his; as it is written in the law and prophets. Of the which restitution writeth St. Austin (Epist. 54 ad Maced.) that no man should prolong, or commend the doing thereof unto his executors, but he that hath committed the fault must make the amends in this case unto him that he hath deceived.

If thou canst not remember whom, neither how much thou hast defrauded; let that be thy daily study, to call to remembrance some way, as well to restore the goods ill gotten, as thou foundest means to ob-

doctrine of antichrist. Here are forbidden all things that do hurt, and not the thing that honestly and charitably can profit the truth, and a good cause.

This law extendeth against those that by any false means contend in judgment to overcome a right cause, or molest an honest person with slander and lies: or such as do feign untrue accusations and crimes against any man; which is not only condemned by this law of God, but also by the law of man. For when an ungodly and malicious person is suffered to lie and speak what he listeth, unpunished; there is nothing more pernicious in the world to make debate, and break charity. Therefore, not only God's laws require the slander to be punished with the same pain, that is due for the offence that falsely he hath accused his brother of; but also by the law of the twelve tables in Rome, slanderers be not unpunished.

Likewise those offend, that secretly intend dissension, or debate between persons and bearers of tales, that they themselves have feigned out of their own malicious interpreting of a thing done to a good purpose, or out of words spoken to an honest end, contrary to the true meaning of them. Against such speaketh St. Austin (*De Civit.* l. xix. 6): "He that propoundeth the thing he cannot prove, though it be true, he should suffer the like pain himself, for things secret should not be opened." Understand, that if the matter appertain unto God, charity, the governors of the commonwealth itself; then should the ill charitably be opened, if it cannot be secretly remedied.

Here is forbidden all flattery and currying of favour; an evil that destroyeth city and world, reigneth in Moses' chair, in the court of princes, and every private house; where men care not, so they may keep themselves in favour, or come into favour,

what or whom they praise or dispraise. So it please their masters, these parasites and servile sort of men hold out, "Yea," and "Nay," as the wind bloweth; which is of all servitudes the greatest. It is not without cause, that so many wise men have given counsel to beware of this pestiferous kind of people. Cato saith, "If any man praise thee, remember to be thine own judge, and we must beware we open not our ears to such as praise us falsely, and not suffer ourselves to be flattered." None be so much in danger of these ill men, and this dangerous sin, as the princes, nobles, and superior powers of the earth. Therefore Ovid saith, "The clusters of flatterers walk in the midst of the court;" and Cicero (*ad Heren.*): "To this dishonest and filthy gain either poverty or avarice stirreth them."

Further, there is here forbidden the judge to admit, or any man to offer in judgment any partial; fore-wrought, or concluded cause. In case it be known, the person accused may appeal unto a higher judge, and refuse the testimony that spake of hatred; or was corrupted other ways, by love, or money, whether it be already paid, or yet to be paid. (Cod. lib. iv. tit. 20.) When the law saith, "Thou shalt not answer as a false witness against thy neighbour;" it declareth, that it is lawful for a man to shew the truth, when he is required. Which condemneth the opinion of those that do think it not lawful for a Christian man to contend in any cause before the civil magistrates on his oath.

Remember these four things in giving of testimony, and then thou shalt not offend.

First, remember God, and the truth, and do for them as much as thou mayest.

Secondly, put apart all affections, fear, love, and hatred. Consider what the cause is, and not whose the cause is. If any man speak good or ill, keep one

ear stopped with thy finger, and hear him that speaketh with the other. So did Alexander the Great; and when he was demanded why he did so, he said, he kept one ear close, to hear the other part. And that is the greatest testimony that any man can have to commend his wisdom: and so we be commanded.

Thirdly, see thou feign nothing, nor add any thing to the cause, whether it be good or bad; as the Pharisees did against Christ and his holy martyr St. Stephen.

Fourthly, see thou hide nothing, nor dissemble, but speak truth, and that plainly as much as thou knowest.

If thou do not observe these four things, it is not only theft against charity, but also a sacrilege against God, which he abhorreth, and shall not be unpunished. The end of this precept is, that we use in all things a simple verity towards all men without fraud, deceit, or guile in word and deed.

And of all, that is before spoken in many words, the sum and whole is, that we violate not, nor hurt with slanderous words; calumniate not the thing well-spoken or done, nor otherwise our brother's name, but be glad in all things to promote him, both in goods and fame.

CHAPTER XII.

The Tenth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, neither desire thy neighbour's wife, neither his man-servant, neither his woman-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

As much as is necessary for man to live an upright and godly life in this world both towards God and man is repeated in the nine commandments be-

fore, if they be observed according to their institution, and the mind of Almighty God, the giver of the same: as he desireth all the external acts of man to extend unto the glory of God, and utility of our neighbour, so doth he in this last precept require, that the mind and soul of man be replenished with all affections and desire of love and charity; that whatsoever we do, it be done without vain-glory and hypocrisy from the heart, not shewing one thing outwardly, and having another secretly in the heart. And this commandment is referred to all the others, though the words of the commandment make mention only of the concupiscence of such things as be our neighbour's possession, as his house, his wife, with other such goods as be his.

And in this precept is declared specially our infirmity and weakness, that we are all miserable sinners; for never was there any, or ever shall be, only Christ excepted, but offended in this precept, what perfection or degree of holiness soever he came unto.

No creature born into the world could satisfy this law. All holy saints had sin remaining in them, as long as they lived; whereby we may learn to call for the great and inestimable help of God, that we may be quit, and saved from this imperfection in Christ Jesu, and accounted in him the children of God and satisfiers of the law. For by this law is required such a charity and sincere love towards God and man, that the mind should not have as much as any contrary motion, or any resistance at all, to stain the glory and beauty of this love, which comprehendeth all those commandments afore rehearsed. As Christ saith, "All things that ye would men should do to you, the same do ye to them; this is the law, and the Prophets."

So that by these words ye may know, what is the scope and end of the law; truly none other thing,

than to bring man to justice and honesty of life, and to make him like unto the law, and so unto Almighty God, whose image the law expresseth; and the more man conformeth himself to live after the law, the more he resembleth the Almighty God, giver of the law. Moses, when he would briefly call unto the remembrance the sum of God's laws, saith: "Therefore now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God ask of thee, saving that thou shouldest fear the Lord, and walk in his commandments, love him, and serve him, with all thy heart and life, and to keep his commandments?" The law would that our hearts should be replenished with the love of God, of the which love proceedeth the love towards our neighbour.

The occasion of all hatred that we bear unto God, his holy word, and our neighbour, is the love of ourselves, and the vanity of this world. In this commandment is not only forbidden the effect of ill, but also the effect and desire towards ill: not only the effect, lust, concupiscence, proneness, inclination, desire, and appetite towards ill; but also, when man is most destitute of sin, and most full of virtue, most far from the devil, and nearest to God, out of hell, and in heaven; yet are his works so imperfect, that if it were not for the free, liberal, and merciful imputation of justice in Christ Jesu, man were damned. He that considereth this precept well, shall the better perceive the greatness of God's infinite mercy, and understand the article and doctrine of free justification by faith.

For although grace prevent the doing of good, and follow it never so much; yet is the work imperfect, and satisfieth not the perfection of the law; only it is Christ's merits that we be saved by. The which article the devil most envieth, and goeth about to oppress as much as is possible. Confess thyself therefore in thy most perfection, and say: "Lord

God, have pity and compassion upon me, always and for ever thy unprofitable servant."

And when thou speakest of grace, remember it is not only the free gift of God to prevent thee in doing well, and to follow thee in the same, but also free imputation of life eternal, which thou canst not merit, neither with grace, nor without grace. For, as I said before, what perfection soever they be come unto, this law accuseth thee: "Thou shalt not covet." But because thou believest in Christ Jesu, thou shalt be saved; and whereas the law promiseth nothing, but upon such condition as we perform it to the uttermost, Christ Jesu taketh from her the rigour and extremity of her justice in us, and layeth it upon himself; so that the bliss eternal, and what the law promiseth for works, God giveth unto us by grace, for his sake that only satisfied the law, Christ Jesus.

And this argument of free justification writeth St. Paul in the eleven first chapters of the Epistle unto the Romans; where in the fourth chapter he putteth Abraham for an example, that is the father of all believers, in whom we may see how the friends of God are justified, or obtain the favour of God; and saith, that Abraham was justified by faith, and before circumcision. Where thou seest two things: one, that the uncircumcised was justified; the other, that no man was justified by the merits or benefits of the sacrament. Likewise, he was promised to be the heir of the world, because of him should be born Christ Jesu the Lord of the world. This he believed, and not by the law merited.

Another reason Paul allegeth, that Abraham, and all others, are justified by faith. It is not possible, that the promise of God should be frustrated or made void; but if it do depend on the justice of the law, it could not be certain; therefore addeth he, "Freely

by faith." Why? Because the faith, in obtaining remission of sin, beholdeth only the mercy of God in Christ Jesu, and looketh upon none other merits.

Yet mark more: he saith that grace is the heritage of the believer, by the justice of faith. Then it is not merit. We are born heirs, and buy it not; as those say that attribute remission of sin unto works or sacraments; which do testify or confirm the friends of God, but do not make them God's friends.

Thus thou seest, what the law is, how thou art bound studiously to obey it, and how it is fulfilled in Christ Jesu, whose justice is thine, if thou do believe in him, as though that thou hadst perfectly satisfied the law thyself.

Certain Objections, that keep Man from the Obedience of God's Laws, solved.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Of Time and Place.*

As it is the manner of all orators, not only to establish the matter they entreat of, with such reasons, arguments, and probations, as best may confirm their purpose; but also to add such reasons, as may incline the hearers to favour the thing spoken, and likewise to leave in their minds such persuasions, as might in a manner prick them forth, and by force constrain them to put in effect and practice the thing spoken of, and then to remove such impediments, and break the force of such contrary arguments, as may be objected to let the thing they would obtain and prove: so doth Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, as thou heardest before, leave no argument nor reason unspoken of, that might excite, stir up, provoke, and force us to the love, obedience, and execution of God's laws, as the 28th chapter sheweth. In the 29th and 30th he removeth all the objections, impediments, and lets, that withhold us from the obedience and doing of God's laws.

The first sophism or carnal objection is, when men say, "It is no place nor time now to learn or obey the word of God; we be not in a monastery, in the school, or in the temple; we be in the broad world, and must do as other men do, and rather serve the place we be in (bark with the wolf), than speak of the Scripture." So do they reason of time likewise: "Now it is too dangerous a season, to reason any matters; let it pass till the world be more quiet;" and such-like. As the Israelites might have said to Moses that commanded to observe this law when

they came into the land of Canaan : We observed not these precepts in the wilderness, wherefore then more in Canaan ? We kept them not for the space of forty years, no more will we hereafter. This objection he breaketh, and proveth that the law should always be observed, and in every place ; and sheweth how the observation of the law was rewarded, and the neglecting of it punished ; and declareth the same by examples. God fed his friends in the desert by miracle from heaven, and preserved all their apparel, that it consumed not, nor perished in the wearing for the space of forty years. Then of Pharaoh, and the two great kings of Hesbon and Basan, Sehon and Og, &c.

CHAPTER XV.

2. *Exception of Persons.*

The second objection is, when men put from themselves the obedience of the law unto others, saying, " Let the priests and monks keep the law, and learn it : what should a prince, magistrate, or gentleman be bound to learn and keep all these holy rules ?" Further, " Youth cannot be tied to so strict canons, it must not be so bridled." Such as be parked in with high walls, and separated from the world, must observe these commandments of God.

This wicked acceptance of persons Moses destroyeth, and most godlily repeateth and numbereth the members of the church, the orders and degrees of the same, and repeateth the words of the alliance, saying : " All ye, this day stand before the Lord your God, your princes, your tribes, your elders, your officers, and all the men of Israel, your children, your wives, and thy guest, &c." Read the place. And why they stood before the Lord, the text declareth, to enter alliance with him. No man-

ner of person is excluded from the league : whereby we know, as God's mercy is common for all men, which is the first part of the condition expressed in the league ; so alike is the obedience towards the law required of all men, specially of such as be the governors of the people in the ministry of the church, or else in the government of the commonwealth. If the preacher be ignorant of God's word, and of a dissolute life, what godliness of virtue can there be in his hearers ? If the king, prince, magistrate, or ruler of the commonwealth, neither know God's laws, nor follow justice, equity, temperance, nor sobriety ; what honesty or virtue can they look to have in their subjects ? They must give example of all virtue. Let them beware betimes that use these objections, and if they think to have God for their God, let them observe his alliance ; for he will punish the transgressors without respect of persons, whosoever it be.

CHAPTER XVI.

3. *Presumption.*

The third objection or satanical sophism is presumption or security of God's will ; when a man knoweth what is to be done, yet against his knowledge, presuming of God's mercy, doth the thing that is ill. This horrible sin extendeth wondrous far. One sitteth in judgment, and falsely judgeth ; another climbeth to honour and riches by flattery, usury, simony, extortion, fraud, and pilling of the poor ; the other holdeth in the truth, that is to be spoken, and letteth out the lies that should be kept in, with all such other like vices, as reign now-a-days in the world. They hear by the words of God, that those evils and abominations be cursed of God ; yet hope they the contrary, and think yet to have God's favour, as the text saith : when he heareth

the words of this oath (where God sweareth to punish the ill, Deut. xxviii.), he promiseth good to himself, saying in his heart: "Yea, if I walk in the imagination of my heart, and take my pleasure, there is no danger."

This diabolical presumption is the occasion that men not only fall into divers kinds of abomination, but also persevere in the same ill; let every man judge his own conscience, and see. Against the word of God he taketh hope, as it seemeth him, of God's mercy, which is no hope at all, but the very with and halter of the devil to strangle at length him that is thus persuaded in this ill and dangerous opinion. They think it is faith; whereas it is very arrogance; a true knowledge of God, when it is but a devilish illusion, and false opinion of man, as appeareth in the same place by Moses' words: "The Lord will not favour him, but then be angry, and kindle his ire against this man; so that every malediction written in this book shall rest upon him, and the Lord shall destroy his name from under heaven." Read the place, and learn to avoid such security and sinister judgment of God and his nature.

The original and fountain, from whence this presumption springeth is ignorance, and a trust in other men's virtues, for whose merits they think to be saved. Some say, they have angels and archangels, and many other holy saints in heaven, that commend their salvation to God. Another trusteth to such works as may be done upon the earth for him, and he do nothing himself, but live as he list, in a vain hope, to have solace in iniquity.

This great offence is nourished divers ways: first, when men judge not aright of God's nature, that he is as angry with sin, as the Scripture saith.

The second is, when men judge amiss of God's works: when they see he punisheth one for sin, they

ink not that the same punishment appertaineth to them. Moses teacheth, and setteth before the people the works of God, his wonders and marvels done in Egypt, in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Imaah and Zeboim, the which the Lord subverted by his ire and fury, and said these works not only punished those that offended, but also should teach other men to avoid God's displeasure; for to that end miracles of punishments be done, as Christ taught, to forewarn men of the ill to come; and thus hath he always called men to repentance.

If they would still be naught, at length he punished verely: as not only the holy histories of the Bible testify, where ye see kings and kingdoms changed and destroyed; but also in profane writers ye shall see, by what miracles God called the magistrates and people of the commonwealth to repentance. Vale-rius writeth, that a mare foaled a hare in the King of Persia's camp, called Xerxes, who, as some writers record, brought against the Athenians 1,700,000 men of war, whom Themistocles, the captain of the Greeks, overcame in the sea. Herodotus writeth this history at large. Had King Xerxes considered the work of God, he might have learned that there is a God that would turn the force and courage of his horsemen into the fear and timidity of the timorous and fearful hare. Livius writeth, that the heavens burned, and divided in two, and how the seas burned. The sun was seen to fight with the moon, and likewise two moons to be seen in one day. These supernatural works might have taught the people of those days amendment of life, had they not been blind as we be; that never take profit by the work of God, otherwise than to eat the revenue of the earth, as the brute beasts of the same, nor have more knowledge of God by the motions of the heavens, than the ox or horse, that likewise see them,

and yet are neither the wiser nor the better. If we marked the eighth and nineteenth Psalms, we should know they were made to another end. The gentiles shame us alway, who learned by the revolution of the year, that nothing was durable in this mortal life.

The third reason is, that men judge amiss of God's promises, who saith he will punish doubtless for sin all manner of people, be they never so strong, as the Prophets always testify. Jeremiah said, if the people converted not from their doing of ill, God would keep promise with them, and destroy their land; but they believed it not, but said; "The temple of God, the temple of God, the temple of God." They judged then, as many do now-a-days, when they see their cities and country strong, they think it not possible to be overcome. So thought the Trojans, and deceived themselves, as the prophecy of Nereus forespake:

*Post certas hyemes uret Achaicus
Ignis Iliacos domos.*

Others so esteem the force of the people, and put their confidence in the same, saying: "Let this habbling preacher say what he list, God is not so cruel as he speaketh of: it shall cost many a broken head before any enemy enter upon any parcel of our commonwealth." But trust to it, if sin be not banished, the ire of God will find a way in at last, and the deferring thereof is only to call us to a better life, and not that he is asleep, or approveth of our ill life. As thou seest example of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, which was passing strong, and the inhabitants thereof the only commonwealth of God, as they said: "The temple of God, the temple of God;" yet at the last, Nebuchadnezzar, whom they looked not for, was their destruction. Mark the punishment and the cause thereof, which was sin, and learn to beware, and to be taught by another man's ill.

CHAPTER XVII.

4. *Curiosity.*

The fourth let or impediment is curiosity and overmuch searching the privities and secrets of God, when men of an ill and licentious life return not to repentance, as the Scripture biddeth, but mount straightway into God's providence and predestination; contemning the will of God that is made open unto him in the Scripture, that God would have him now to repent, and to receive grace; and search to know the thing that never was made open to man or angel, the event and end of things to come. Thus reasoneth man with himself: Who knoweth what his last hour shall be? Wherefore savoureth God the one, and not the other? Sometimes the good maketh an ill end, and the ill a good. In this opinion and inscrutable mystery he weareth all his wits, and at the end of his cogitations findeth more hidden and doubtful objections than at the beginning, so that he cometh from this school neither wiser nor better.

Moses removeth this ungodly let and impediment, saying: "The secrets of the Lord our God are made open unto us, and unto our children for ever, that we do all the precepts of this law." The which words plainly condemn our foolish and audacious presumption, that seek to know what shall happen unto us in the hour of death, and will not know the thing that should be done in all our lives; to wit, that God would have us know the thing that is opened unto us in the Scripture, or God's mercy promised in Christ Jesu, and follow him in all virtue. If we offend and repent, and leave sin, then hath he promised mercy, and will give it. Moses saith: "Do the thing that thou art bid to do, and follow the will of God made open to thee in his word."

As for the disputation of God's providence, it is a curiosity and no religion, a presumption and no faith, a let of virtue and furtherance of vice. When thou hearest repentance spoken of, learn that lesson out of hand, lest peradventure thou be never a good scholar in the divinity of God's laws. It fareth many times with us, that we go long to school in divinity, and yet never be good divines, as it fareth in the school of rhetoric: where, if at the beginning the scholar profit not (as Aristotle saith), he shall never be a good orator. Therefore Moses saith: "God gave you not a heart to understand, eyes to see, nor ears to hear until this present day." Here doth Moses speak ironically, and seemeth to deny the thing he would affirm.

As Aristotle or Cicero might say, when they have applied all their labour, and done the best they can to make their scholars learned, yet profit nothing, then depart out of the school, and say unto their audience: "I never opened unto you the science that I taught you." Not that the fault was in him, but in the auditors that neglected their diligence and doctrine. So doth Moses now speak of God, not that the fault was in him, that those unkind people understood not the doctrine he taught, but in themselves, as it appeareth in the text; for he useth now the rod of persecution, punisheth them, beateth them, yea and killeth them, because they would not learn the thing he taught them: yea further, he shewed that his pleasure was, they should choose the good, and leave the ill, to be in wealth, and avoid the woe. This argument he proveth of his own nature, which is amiable, loving, and holy, inclined to do well unto man, and to be at peace with him. But because man of his own malice contemneth the word and doctrine of God, he is not only rigorous and severe against man, but also he waxeth so angry

for sin, as he that chafeth and moveth himself, that all men may perceive by his countenance he is offended; therefore (saith the text) the fury of God shall smoke against the sinner.

Our gossellers be better learned than the Holy Ghost. For they wickedly attribute the cause of punishment and adversity to God's providence, which is the cause of no ill, as he himself can do no ill: and of every mischief that is done, they say, it was God's will. The Holy Ghost putteth another cause, that is to say, sin in man, and contempt of his holy word:

Further, the pain is not inflicted by predestination to loose man; but both predestination and the affliction extend to call man from damnation. The blind soothsayers that wrote of things to come, are more to be esteemed than these curious and high-climbing wits, for they attribute the cause of ill to the ill aspects and sinister conjunctions of the planets.

Refuse not therefore the grace offered, nor, once received, banish it with ill conversation. If we fall, let us hear Almighty God, that calleth us to repentance with his word, and return. Let us not continue in sin, nor heap one sin upon another; lest at last we come to a contempt of God and his word, for remission is promised to as many as repent, as Moses sheweth, and likewise all the Scripture, and examples thereof.

But remember what the text saith, that thou must convert unto God, and that by the means and mediation of Christ, and that with all thy heart, and then thou mayst find remedy. Convert not to superstition, and buy not a mass for thy sins, nor look for help of any saint, but only of God, as his word teacheth; for he that strake thee for sin, can heal thee again. Say not in adversity, as Cicero did: "Except God, or some good hap, do save us, we

cannot escape." For there is nothing in heaven nor earth that saveth, but God alone.

CHAPTER XVIII.

5. *Desperation.*

The fifth let or impediment is desperation, when men think they cannot be saved, but are excluded from all mercy. And this is not a light and small let for men that have offended; and it is contrary unto presumption. For presumption hath some similitude and show of hope; for although man offend the will of God, yet doth he trust, in the doing and perseverance of ill, that God will not punish: the which impiety and wickedness taketh from God his justice.

Of the contrary nature is desperation; it taketh from God his mercy; for when they offend and continue in sin, they think there is no mercy left for them; the which sin and blasphemy thus proceedeth in man. The desperate person hath now his eye on God's justice; readeth, heareth, and seeth how severely, and with what rigour, he revengeth the transgression of his law; he beholdeth the examples in whom God executed the same rigour and punishment, so that his conscience is oppressed withal; he considereth his own strength, which is prone unto nothing, but unto ill; he seeth how difficult and hard the things be, that God commandeth, especially because of his custom and long continuance in sin.

This discourse and progress in that knowledge of sin beareth him in hand, that it is impossible to return unto God; then doth he for the most part abridge and shorten his own days, or else choose another kind of life than God appointeth in the Scripture. As Sardanapalus, the last king of the Assyrians, prescribed at his death this rule to live by,

and left the word of God; of whom Justinus writeth: "Eat, drink, and play, for after death there is no joy."

Moses, like a good physician, teacheth a remedy against this dangerous disease, and sheweth the way unto God, declaring that God is full of mercy, and ready to forgive; and beginneth his oration in this manner unto such as be afflicted and oppressed with sin: "When there come upon thee all those things, when God hath afflicted thee for thy sins, and thou returnest unto him with all thy heart, he shall deliver thee from captivity, and receive thee to his mercy again." Of the which text learn this doctrine, that God will always forgive, how many and how horrible soever the sins be. And learn to fear presumption, and to beware of desperation.

God desireth thy obedience towards the law, though thou canst not fulfil it. Likewise, he desireth to do well unto thee, and not to punish thee. See, what paternal and more than fatherly love God Almighty beareth unto all us miserable sinners in Christ Jesu his only Son, who is ours by faith; which faith solely and wholly leadeth us to eternal life, as Christ saith: "So the Father loved the world, that he would give his only Son for it, that all that believe in him cannot perish, but have life everlasting;" and so, "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life."

But unto this way of life (to Christ by faith) all men be not brought after one sort; for as man's life is not maintained with one kind of meat, but the child with pap, the full age with stronger meat, the health with common meats, the sickness with such as be of lighter digestion: so is it in bringing man to faith in Christ Jesu, our Saviour. One doctrine cannot do it, because there be diverse sorts of people in the world.

Some are hypocrites, that would justify themselves by their works: these know not the greatness of sin, neither their own imperfection, nor the damnation of God against sin.

This man would not have the free remission of sin in Christ Jesu preached unto him; but the law and Ten Commandments, that by it he learn first to know the horror of sin, and greatness of God's ire against it.

Another sort live without all fear and honesty, a filthy life, as well of those that profess the Gospel, as those that hate it. Those, because they know not the abomination of their sin, and the severity of God's anger against it, be not meet to have the Gospel of remission of sin preached unto them, but to be instructed in the law, and rather brought to a fear of God's punishments, that remaineth for all impenitent persons. They should be excommunicated and punished with the discipline of God's word, that first they might know their sin, and acknowledge their damnation.

Thus Christ taught the young man that trusted in his own works; because he was an hypocrite, he preached not unto him the Gospel of free remission of sin, but sent him to the law, and to the works thereof; not that he meant man could fulfil the law, or justify himself by the works thereof, or that Christ would not that he should be partaker of his mercy; but that the hypocrite might come to acknowledge his sins, the ire of God, and damnation of himself by the law: the which thing known, he should be constrained of necessity to seek his salvation by faith in Christ Jesu, except he would perish in his sin.

St. Paul did not bid the Corinthians preach faith and remission of sin to the adulterer that continued in sin, but bid them excommunicate him, and as

as did like offence, and that no man should
 or drink with him. But rather unto such as
 know their sins, and be troubled with the heaviness
 thereof, as David was, that said: "Thy darts, Lord,
 have lit on me, and thy hands oppress me: no part
 of my body is free from pain, because I have sinned,
 I am drowned in sin, and the punishment thereof
 is more weighty than I can bear; the sores and wounds
 that thou hast stricken me withal for my sin stink,
 I spew out filth and corruption for my transgres-
 sions;" and so forth with a dolorous and lamentable
 confession. Read the Psalm: it beginneth: "Lord,
 do not chasten me in thine ire." There shalt thou learn
 the use of penitence. To him and such-like, as the law
 hath wrought her office in, appertaineth the preach-
 ing of the Gospel of remission of sin, and deliverance
 from hell in Christ Jesu.

So Christ preached unto Mary Magdalen; for as
 she had most grievously offended, so knew she her-
 self, and was afflicted with the dolours of hell. When
 she came unto Christ to know the way to heaven, he
 bid her not to the law; for the law had first done
 her office in her, and made her afraid: therefore,
 poor wretch, she heard, "Thy sins be forgiven, and
 thy faith hath saved thee."

There is another sort meet to hear the Gospel, and
 not to be feared with the law; to wit, such as have
 through Christ remission of their sin, and walk by
 faith in the vocation of God, and yet, during this
 mortal life, bear about with them the relics and
 remnant of sin in their bodies: to these men preach-
 ed St. Paul the Gospel: "There is no condemna-
 tion unto them that are grafted in Christ Jesu;" lest
 perchance a man should too much sustain the weight of
 the law, as Paul maketh exclamation, for fear of the
 power of it.

Further, unto this man it is also necessary to

minge the law now and then, to this end, to keep him in his office, in the fear of God; that by the law the affections of the flesh may be kept under, and by the Gospel may be preserved the spirit and order of faith.

This is to preach in the church of God; not to fear the sorrowful conscience with the rigour of the law: neither to flatter those hypocrites, epicures, and lascivious gospellers with the promise of faith, until such time as they amend, and the law hath done its office in them. And in case preachers had used and applied the Scripture to the use it was written, and as their auditors had need, there had never been such a sudden and horrible defection from the Gospel in many places, as now we see.

CHAPTER XIX.

6. *Ignorance.*

The sixth let or impediment, wherewith men excuse themselves from the obedience of the law of God, is the pretence of ignorance, the which they do think shall excuse them. Thus they say, "The Scripture hath so many mysteries in itself, and is too hard for our capacity. Sometime the letter, sometime the spirit, and sometime both must be understood." Further they say, "The doctors brawl and chide between themselves, and how should the unlearned understand it aright?"—"Who can tell," saith another, "whether this be the true law or not? If it were the true law of God, then should it contain all verities, and have no need of man's laws."

Now the greatest part of such as have the name of Christianity, say, God's law saveth no man, instructeth no man aright; no, it is not wholesome for man, except it be held and aided by the law of the bishops. This the world owes to the bishops' decrees,

It have called the authority of the holy Testament
it containeth all truth (whose sufficiency and verity
ealed with the precious blood of Christ), into doubt,
d not into doubt only, but clean abrogated it, and
ffered their own laws. Confer their preachings
d ministration of the sacraments with the holy word,
d law of God, and see.

Others say, I have no wit to understand the word
God; and if I had, yet have I no leisure to learn

Against this objection Moses answereth and
th, This law is sufficient, is simple, and plain, easy
be understood, a perfect doctrine, and required of
men. Thus he proveth it: The commandment
at I prescribe unto thee to-day, is not far above
ee, nor put from thee. Read the last half of the
apter. By the which words it appeareth, that God
th made his will and pleasure simply and plainly
en unto his people, with apt sentences and open
rds, and also put the same to us, that we should
it seek it with great danger of our life, to sail into
e Indies for it, or look for it in heaven above, as
ose that receive all things by revelation or apparitions
of angels, or other such means. But Moses
ith, it is no need of any such ambassadors, and so
ith Abraham. For man may learn out of the
ription what is to be done, and what not to be
one, what is the condition of the good and of the
id. No need to seek the knowledge thereof in
gypt, Athens, or Rome. But the word is present,
id at hand with thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart,
at thou shouldest do it.

By these words we see, that in the greatest sinner
at is, is a certain rule and knowledge to live well
ereby if he did follow it. So confounded St. Paul
e gentiles of sin, because they knew the evil they
id was condemned by the testimony of their own
onscience. For the law of God to do well by, is

naturally written in the heart of every man. He that will diligently search himself shall soon find the same ; and in case man should behold his own image both in body and in soul, although there be no law written, nor heaviness over our heads to testify the goodness and the justice of God, and the equity of an honest life, man's conscience would tell him, when he doth well, and when evil.

Further, the judgment and discourse of reason desireth not only to live justly in this world, but also to live for ever in eternal felicity without end, and cometh by the similitude of God, which yet remaineth in the soul after the sin of Adam. Whereby we see plainly, that those excuses of ignorance be damnable, when man seeth he could do well if he followed the judgment of his own conscience ; so that we see that the law of God is either outwardly or inwardly, or both ways, opened unto man ; and by God's grace he might do the good, and leave the evil, if it were not of malice and accustomed doing of sin. The which excuseth the mercy and goodness of God, and maketh, that no men shall be excused in the latter judgment, how subtilly soever they now excuse the matter, and put their evil doings from them, and lay it upon the predestination of God, and would excuse it by ignorance ; or say, they cannot be good, because they be otherwise destined.

This stoical opinion reprehended Horace : “ No man is so cruel (saith he), but may wax meek, so that he give a willing ear to discipline.”

Although thou canst not come to so far knowledge in the Scripture as others that believed, by reason thou art unlearned, or else thy vocation will not suffer thee all days of thy life to be a student ; yet mayest thou know, and upon pain of damnation art bound to know the articles of thy faith ; to know God in Christ, and the holy catholic church by the

word of God written ; the Ten Commandments, to know what works thou shouldest do, and what to leave undone ; the *Paternoster*, Christ's prayer, which is an abridgment, epitome, or compendious collection of all the Psalms and prayers written in the whole Scripture: in the which thou prayest for the remission of sin, as well for thyself as for all others, desirest the grace of the Holy Ghost, to preserve thee in virtue, and givest thanks for the goodness of God towards thee and all others.

He that knoweth less than this cannot be saved ; and he that knoweth no more than this, if he follow his knowledge, cannot be damned. There be two common verses that all men in a manner know, that teach us that to know Christ, though we know no more, is sufficient ; that is to say, " To be ignorant, is to know many things without Christ. If thou know Christ well, it is sufficient, though thou be ignorant of all other things."

Thus I have written on the ten holy precepts of Almighty God according unto the Scripture. Fare ye well, in our only and sole joy and consolation, Christ Jesu.

A CONFESSION,

&c.

THE FIRST ARTICLE.

*believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of
heaven and earth.*

BELIEVE in one God only, one in essence and
ance, three in person ; the Father, the Son, and
only Ghost. I believe in the Father, as the ori-
and beginning of all things, as well visible as
ble : on whom also they depend, as well in
being, as also in their conservation. And he
deth on none but on himself, being eternal and
sting, without end or beginning.

Believe in the Son, as the divine word and wis-
of the Father, which is eternally and before all
s engendered of the Father, of his proper sub-
e and nature ; because in him shineth his face
proper image, which otherwise is invisible unto
l man.

Believe in the Holy Ghost, as a virtue and eter-
power, which neither is made, nor created, nei-
engendered, but proceeding of the Father and
Son eternally, even as a love proceeding from
persons.

I believe, that the three Persons are of the one
re self-same essence and substance, nature, au-
ty, power, will, goodness, wisdom, and eter-
and that these three are but one spiritual sub-
e, eternal, without end or beginning, true,
just, merciful, of a sovereign power and wis-
having and containing in itself all goodness,
eeding any thing.

III. I believe, that this God, which is one in essence and three in person, ought only to be served, honoured, feared, loved, worshipped, and to be called upon in all our necessities, as he that only can and will provide therefor, and none other. And therefore I say and confess, that I believe in one God only, that is to say, that I acknowledge and receive him for one only Lord, Master, and Saviour : of whom proceedeth all that is good in me, by whom I can do all things, and without whom I can do nothing. In him only do I set mine affiance and set mine heart, hoping that he, assisting me with his holy Spirit, shall be with me against all men, and that he will deliver me from all perils and dangers, through his grace and mercy, without any merits of mine own ; and that he shall minister to me all things necessary, as well for my soul as body, even like a good Father, as he hath promised in his holy word.

IV. I believe, that the same God Almighty hath of nothing created from the beginning both heaven and earth, and all things in them contained ; that is to say, all things as well heavenly as earthly, visible as invisible, reasonable as unreasonable, sensible as insensible : the which he doth entertain, lead, guide, and govern by his divine wisdom ; without whose providence nothing cometh to pass either in this world or in the other.

V. I believe, that the same God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, after that he had created all things, did create and shape man to his own image and likeness ; that is to say, immortal, good, just, true, wise, merciful, and perfect in all things ; making him partaker of the goodness, justice, and other perfections of God, having a will that could agree in all things unto the will of his Lord : but all that through grace without any kind of merit.

VI. I believe also, that as the Lord hath created all things heavenly and earthly for the service of man,

and to the end that by his creatures he might come unto the knowledge of the Creator: even so also hath he formed and made man for himself, that of him and by him he might be known, loved, feared, served, and honoured, which is the greatest good thing that is or can be in man; and that in him might shine the image of divine virtues and perfections, through good works, the which God hath ordained, because we should walk in them unto his honour and praise, and to the confusion of the adversary: and that by these means the fall of angels might be repaired, and that man might possess the everlasting kingdom, made and prepared for him before the foundations of the world were laid.

VII. I believe, that the same man was ordained of the Lord God a master and ruler over all his creatures: the which thing he hath lost through his sin, as well for his own part, as also for all his posterity: the which rule and lordship, I believe, doth chiefly appertain unto Jesus Christ, verily God and man, and to those unto whom he will communicate the same, as unto his own faithful, and not unto the infidels and damned.

VIII. I believe, that the first man, through the craft and subtilty of Satan, did slide and fall from the excellency, wherein the Lord had created him; consenting, through his own free will (which at that time he had), unto the subtle suggestion of the serpent, whereby he lost the graces that the Lord had given him; in such sort, that of wise he became foolish, of just unjust, of true a liar, of perfect altogether imperfect: having from thenceforth a will wholly corrupted, which neither could nor would agree with the will of God, but altogether with the will of the devil, the world, the flesh, and sin; which could do nothing of himself but evil, seeing that he is altogether carnal, bond, captive, and sold

under sin. This is the free, yea, to say more truly, the bond-will that man hath in this present life.

IX. I believe, that this disorder and corruption of nature was not only in Adam, because of his sin, but is also in all men generally, which come of him (Jesus Christ only excepted) : and that in such sort, that all men after their own nature are corrupt, unjust, liars, ignorant, unkind, and imperfect in all things, and have no power of their own nature to do, think, speak, or will any thing that may please God; until that they be regenerated and renewed by the Spirit of the Lord.

X. I believe, that this corruption of nature, otherwise called original sin, is the fountain and root of all sins : for the which all the miseries and adversities that we endure in this present life, as well in body as soul, do come unto us : yea, and in the end double death, that is to say, both of body and soul. These be the fruits and rewards of sin. But although the same be due and common to all men generally, nevertheless the Lord through his mercy hath reserved to himself a certain number (which are only known to himself), the which he hath drawn from this corrupt heap, and hath sanctified and cleansed the same in the blood of his Son Jesus Christ, and by means thereof hath made them vessels of election and honour, apt unto all good works.

XI. I believe, that the Father in Jesu Christ, his Son, through the Holy Ghost, hath elected and chosen those that are his own, according to his good will, before the foundations of the world were laid, whom he hath predestinated unto eternal life : that thereby they might be his children adoptives, over whom he hath without comparison a much greater care, than the best father can have over the best children in the world : for he suffereth not that any thing shall come to pass, either on high in heaven,

or beneath on earth, which shall not be for their good and great profit.

XII. I believe, that the Father, through his Son, with the Holy Ghost, hath always, from the beginning, intended to restore man : unto whom, after he had sinned, he shewed himself, promising unto him the blessed Seed, by whom the head of the serpent should be trodden down, and by whom the faithful should receive blessing. By this promise (which hath since been oftentimes ratified and confirmed to the holy fathers) man (which otherwise had despaired in sin) is relieved, holpen, comforted, and clothed with hope, even unto the full performing thereof.

XIII. I believe also, that after this promise the Lord hath prescribed and given the law of the commandments to man, promising life to the observers thereof, and death to the transgressors of the same. And he gave them, not to the end that man should seek justification, salvation, or life therein ; but for the policy, peace, and tranquillity of his people, for the defence of the good, for the chastening and punishing of the wicked, and to preserve each one in his office : but specially that thereby man might the better know himself, his disease, his poverty, and imperfection : and by means thereof to take an occasion to humble himself before this lawgiver, and to seek remedy, salvation, and life in some other, that is to say, in the holy promised Seed, which is Jesus Christ. For this cause the law is called a school-master to come to Christ, the which also serveth us for a glass to know our sins by, and to increase the same knowledge in us. Likewise it serveth us for an accuser to accuse us before the Lord, and for a severe and cruel judge to declare the wrath and judgment of God over us, and his condemnation unto eternal death ; and by this means to make us afraid,

and to bring us unto despair, until we be comforted by the Gospel through faith in Jesus Christ, whereby we are delivered from all these curses. These are the offices of the law, the which are turned unto our good through faith in the Gospel; the which hath other offices, and clean contrary. For the rest, I confess, that the law of the Lord is good, just, holy, and perfect: and where the same doth not bring us unto perfection, it is not alone of itself, but of us, which are altogether imperfect, and can in no wise accomplish the same, no, not to touch it with our little finger.

XIV. I believe and confess Jesus Christ to be the fulness, the end, and accomplishment of the law, to the justification of all that believe, through whom and by whom only all the promises of the Father be accomplished, yea even to the uttermost; the which also alone hath perfectly satisfied the law in that which no other amongst men could perform; for so much as the law doth command things impossible, the which nevertheless man must accomplish, not by working, but through believing: for so is the law accomplished through faith, and not through works; and by these means shall man find the righteousness of faith to be available before the Lord, and not the righteousness of works, the which leadeth nothing unto perfection.

As concerning the first point of my faith, this is that which I believe of the Father, the things that are made by him, and consequently of the Holy Trinity, and also of the soul of man. Now let us come to the second point, which is of the Son of God, and of the things done by him, especially of the restoring and repairing again of man.

THE SECOND ARTICLE.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord ; which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary ; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried ; he descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead ; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty : from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

XV. I believe, that Jesus Christ is verily God and verily man, having two natures comprehended in one person ; a nature divine, after the which he is the only natural Son of God, equal with the Father in all things ; and a nature human, after the which he is very man, in all things like unto us (sin excepted).

XVI. I believe, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in the fulness of the time appointed of the Father from the beginning, was sent into the world by the Father, and was made perfect man, and was conceived in the womb of a woman, being a pure virgin, called Mary, of her proper substance, and of her proper blood ; so that he was found a perfect man, descending of the seed of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and other fathers, unto whom the promise was made.

XVII. I believe also, that all this was done by the working of the Holy Ghost, without the work of men, to the end that all that was wrought therein might be holy and without spot, pure and clean ; and that thereby our conception might be made clean and holy, which of itself is altogether spotted and defiled with sin.

XVIII. I believe, that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, without any manner of sin, and without breach of her virginity ; so that by his pure

and holy nativity he hath purified and made holy ours, which of itself is altogether unclean, and defiled with sin. In this nativity of Christ I see and consider the first estate and condition of man, with his fall, which was the cause of Christ's coming into the world. Likewise in this I see and consider the favour and inestimable love of God the Father, which hath presented and given his only Son to serve us. I see also and consider in this nativity the charity of the Son, which hath abased and humbled himself to lift us up, became poor to make us rich, became bond to make us free, and became the Son of man to make us the children of God, and heirs of eternal life. By whose coming the nature of man is repaired and made noble, and man that was lost and destroyed was thereby relieved and set in his perfection, and hath recovered all that he hath lost through sin, yea and more. By the same mean also all the treasures, graces, and blessings of the Lord, are given and communicated unto man, but all this through grace, without any merits.

XIX. I believe also, and confess by the holy Scriptures, another conception and birth of Jesus Christ, which is spiritual; the which, I say, is of no less dignity than the first: the which is, that every one, that is faithful, ought to conceive into his heart and spirit Jesus Christ, through a true and lively faith, and to bring him forth by open confessing of him with his mouth as often, and whensoever it shall be needful. I do esteem this conception and nativity to be so necessary to salvation, that if the Virgin Mary had not more blessedly borne Jesus Christ in her heart and spirit than in her womb, her carnal motherhood would have profited her little. By and for this cause we are called mothers, brethren, and sisters of Jesus Christ.

XX. I believe, that the same Jesus Christ is

verily Christ; that is to say, the Messiah anointed by the Holy Ghost, because he was the very King, the Prophet, and great Sacrificer, that should sacrifice for all that believe: the which also is promised in the Law, and is the same of whom all the Prophets have spoken. This anointing of Christ is not corporal, of material and visible oil, as was that of the kings, priests, and prophets in times past: but it is spiritual, of an invisible oil, which is the grace and gifts of the Holy Ghost, wherewith he is replenished above all others. So that this anointing has descended even unto us, which have felt and proved the sweetness thereof: and by it also we bear the name of Christians, that is to say, anointed.

XXI. I believe, that this sacrificing of Jesus Christ was not levitical or carnal, to immolate, offer up, and to sacrifice beasts, kine, and other sensible things, as did Aaron and his successors; but spiritual, to offer and sacrifice himself, that is to say, his body and blood, for the remission of the sins of the whole world. Even as likewise his kingdom is not of this world, carnal, but spiritual; which consisteth in the guiding and governing of his own by his holy Spirit, over whom he reigneth by his word, and that to the destruction of all his adversaries, which are sin, death, hell, Satan, and all infidels, wicked, and reprobate.

XXII. I believe, that Jesus Christ hath verily exercised these three offices, that is to say, of a Prophet, of a King, and a Sacrificer, not only in this world, being a mortal man as we are; but also that he exerciseth yet daily the same in heaven before the face of the Father, where he sitteth and appeareth continually for us, and from thence by his holy Spirit doth teach, help, maintain, and defend his own: and therefore is he called a Prophet, a King, and a great Sacrificer, after the order of Melchisedec, that

is to say, eternal, and not after the order of Aaron, which had its end with the law.

XXIII. I believe, that the same Jesus Christ (after he had preached the Gospel in the country of Judæa and Galilee for the space of three years, or thereabouts, and declared himself to be the natural Son of God, as well by his marvellous works, as by his words and the writings of the Prophets) was unjustly and falsely accused by the priests, who, when they had taken, and in their counsel unjustly condemned him to death, brought him bound to Pilate, the provost then at Jerusalem; who, at the instance of the said priests, did unjustly, wrongfully, and without cause, condemn him to death, and that the most horrible and slanderous death that could be imagined or devised, that is to say, to be put on the cross, crucified between two thieves, as if he had been their prince and captain: the which thing he suffered and endured willingly and innocently, without deserving the same. For otherwise could he not have satisfied for us, neither could his cross have profited us.

XXIV. I believe also, that while he was upon the said cross, dying and giving up his spirit unto God his Father, he descended into hell, that is to say, he did verily taste and feel the great distress and heaviness of death, and likewise the pains and torments of hell; that is to say, the great wrath and severe judgment of God upon him, even as if God had utterly forsaken him, yea, as though God had been his extreme enemy; so that he was constrained with loud voice to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This is simply my understanding of Christ's descending into hell. And besides, I know well that this article hath not from the beginning been in the Creed, and that many others have otherwise both understood and inter-

preted it; who esteem that Christ verily and in deed descended into hell, to the place of the damned, alleging the text of St. Peter; the which I confess is yet covered and hid from me. The Lord vouchsafe to open the gate unto us, and to give us an entrance into such mysteries!

XXV. I believe, that all this was done, not for himself, which never committed sin, in whose mouth was never found deceit nor lie; but for the love of us poor and miserable sinners, whose place he occupied upon the cross, as a pledge, or one that represented the person of all the sinners that ever were, be now, or shall be, unto the world's end. And because they through their sins have deserved to feel and taste of the extreme pains of death, to be forsaken of God and of all creatures, to feel the wrath and severe judgment of God upon them; Christ, which was their pledge, satisfying for them upon the cross, hath felt and endured all the same, and that altogether to make us free, to deliver us from all these pains, from the wrath and judgment of God, from condemnation and eternal death. And I do clearly reject and esteem as fables, all the limbos of the fathers, and of young children, purgatory, and such other like, to be follies, mockeries, and abuses, which are invented and found out by man, without the word of the Lord. For I neither believe, nor receive more than two places in the world to come: that is to say, heaven for the faithful and elect, with the angels; and hell for the infidels and reprobate, with the devils.

XXVI. I believe and consider this death and passion, even as I do all other mysteries of Jesus Christ, not only as touching the history, as a pattern and example to follow, as was that of the holy men and women which are dead for the Lord's cause: but also principally as touching the cause, fruits,

and uses thereof, thereby to know the greatness of my sins, the grace and mercy of the Father, and the charity of the Son, by whom we are reconciled unto God, delivered from the tyranny of the devil, and restored to the liberty of the Spirit. This is the glass without spot, to teach us to know our filthiness, the laver or clear fountain to wash and cleanse us, the infinite treasure to satisfy all our creditors: of whom and by whom only the divine justice is fully satisfied for all the sins of all that have been, be now, or shall be, unto the end of the world. And therefore I do believe and confess, that Christ's condemnation is mine absolution; that his crucifying is my deliverance; his descending into hell is mine ascending into heaven; his death is my life; his blood is my cleansing and purging, by whom only I am washed, purified, and cleansed from all my sins. So that I neither receive, neither believe any other purgatory, either in this world or in the other, whereby I may be purged, but only the blood of Jesus Christ, by the which all are purged and made clean for ever.

XXVII. I believe, that Jesus Christ, by the sacrifice of his body, which he offered upon the tree of the cross, hath defaced and destroyed sin, death, and the devil, with all his kingdom; and hath wholly performed the work of our salvation, and hath abolished and made an end of all other sacrifices. So that from thenceforth there is none other propitiatory sacrifice, either for the living or the dead, to be looked for or sought for, than the same. For by this one only oblation hath he consecrated for ever all those that are sanctified.

XXVIII. I believe, that the holy supper of the Lord is not a sacrifice, but only a remembrance and commemoration of this holy sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Therefore it ought not to be worshipped as God,

neither as Christ therein contained : who must be worshipped in faith only, without all corruptible elements. Likewise I believe and confess, that the Popish mass is the invention and ordinance of man, a sacrifice of antichrist, and a forsaking of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, that is to say, of his death and passion, and that it is a stinking and infected sepulchre, which hideth and covereth the merit of the blood of Christ ; and therefore ought the mass to be abolished, and the holy supper of the Lord to be restored, and set in its perfection again.

XXIX. I believe also, that as the Prophet Jonah was in the whale's belly (which is a place of corruption) three days and three nights without being corrupted, and the third day came out of him alive without any manner of hurt : even so Jesus Christ, after he was dead, was laid and put in a new sepulchre (which is a place of corruption), in the which he was three days and three nights, not touched with any kind of infection, of filthiness, or corruption ; but continued in his perfection, to declare the virtue of his blood, to accomplish the writings of the holy Prophets, and to verify the truth, as well of his body, as of his death ; with whom I believe that the law was buried, abrogated, and abolished, as touching the faithful ; not as the acquitting of an obligation, whereby they should be no more bound to live and walk therein ; but only as concerning condemnation, that is to say, that the transgression of the law condemneth them not before the judgment-seat of God, because of their faith, which they have in Jesus Christ : and therefore within one sepulchre I do comprehend three things to be buried, that is to say, Christ, the law, and all the faithful which ought to be crucified and buried with Christ through the mortification of their flesh.

XXX. I believe, that as Jesus Christ was put to

death for our sins, so also he rose again the third day for our justification unto everlasting life; wherein he hath openly declared himself both God and man, obtaining the victory over all his adversaries, and hath confounded and beaten down all his enemies; that is to say, the world, sin, death, hell, and Satan; not for himself, but for us that believe in him, knowing that his victory is ours, and that in him and by him we overcome the self-same enemies, obtaining the victory over them, unto the honour of the Lord, and our great profit.

XXXI. I believe and consider this resurrection of Jesus Christ not only as a history, as was that of Lazarus and other such-like, which miraculously were raised up by the virtue of the Lord; but also as the example and cause efficient of my rising again, and as the earnest and first fruits of the general resurrection of all that believe. That as Jesus Christ was raised up the third day after his death unto eternal life through his divine virtue, even so by the same virtue I hope one day to be raised up in body and soul unto eternal life, after that I have here in this world been raised up in spirit through lively and true faith in newness of life, mortifying and crucifying the flesh with the affections and concupiscences of the world, the which ought to be dead and crucified to us, and we to it. For we are buried with Christ in his death through baptism, to the end that as he is risen from death by the glory of the Father without dying any more; even so we should walk in newness of life, without serving of sin any more, searching always principally for the things that are on high, heavenly, and eternal, and forsaking the earthly and transitory things of the world; knowing that we have not here an abiding city, but that we must seek for that which is to come.

XXXII. I believe and confess, that Jesus Christ,

on the fortieth day after his resurrection, visibly and before all his Apostles did ascend into heaven; that is to say, in the majesty of his Father in glory and eternal felicity, in the which he was before he came into this miserable world to become man, yea even before the foundation of the world was laid; that is to say, from everlasting.

XXXIII. I believe, that he is ascended into heaven to accomplish and to finish all things, and to open heaven for us, that we might ascend after him, and follow him as our head, to be eternally knit with him in glory, the which thing here we begin through faith. In like manner he hath done the same for the benefit of his church, that he might send unto his Apostles that Comforter that he promised them, by the which they were comforted, instructed, and guided in all truth, and thereby is his church supported, maintained, and defended against all the blasts of Satan, and all the gates of hell.

XXXIV. I believe also, that he is ascended into heaven to be our patron, intercessor, mediator, and advocate; and that he now appeareth for us before the face of the Father, obtaining for us grace and abundance of all good things, in such sort that I neither acknowledge nor receive any other mediator between God and man, neither any other advocate or intercessor before God the Father, than his only Son Jesus Christ our Lord. To him do I resort; with him do I hold myself contented, and none other do I search for, neither will I; fearing to blaspheme the name of God, by giving that unto the creature, that appertaineth only to the Creator, and to the servant, that which only appertaineth to the master.

XXXV. I believe, that all they which demand, seek for, or receive any other mediator, intercessor, or advocate towards God the Father, than Jesus Christ his Son; the same blasphemeth against God,

and doth dishonour unto Jesus Christ, and unto the saints by whom he prayeth. For as God the Father will be known, served, loved, feared, and honoured in his Son, and by his only Son Jesus Christ, and not by any other means, even so will he be prayed unto and called upon in his and by his only Son Jesus Christ, and none otherwise. In this I will neither dispraise, nor think or speak evil of the blessed saints, which are in heaven with the Lord; but I will have them in honour, and reverence them as the faithful saints of the Lord, as the temple of the Holy Ghost, and as the true members of Christ; and have them as glasses and patterns before mine eyes, to follow them, as well in their honest life and good conversation, and also in their faithful and holy doctrine. And as concerning them or by them I do understand none other thing, knowing that all my good, my help, and succour, proceedeth of God only, by the mean of Jesus Christ alone, which hath made the saints worthy of his glory by his only grace, by the which also I believe he will make me worthy with them to be their companion in glory, that we all together should give unto him only all honour, praise, and glory for evermore.

XXXVI. I believe, that the same Jesus Christ is set on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; that is to say, that he reigneth in one and the same majesty and equal power with God his Father, by the which he so governeth his own unto the world's end, that the power of none adversary can annoy them without his permission and will. I believe also, that the Father hath made him lord and ruler over all creatures, as well heavenly as earthly; giving unto him all power over heaven and earth, and that he hath lifted him up above all rule, power, and lordship, and above every name that is named not only in this world, but also in the world to come, and

hath made all things subject under his feet, and hath appointed him over all things to be the head of his church, which is his body (Eph. i. 21) ; and therefore I neither receive, neither acknowledge any other head of the church, but only Jesus Christ, which hath given his blood to wash away the filthiness, and to heal the wounds thereof, and the same to preserve, nourish, defend, and govern by his holy Spirit. The same is the only head and foundation of the church, whereon every one ought to build according to his vocation.

XXXVII. I believe, that Jesus Christ is ascended into heaven, and that he is there corporally ; that is to say, in flesh, in body, and in soul, after such sort, that he neither is nor can, after the same mean and fashion, be here beneath on earth with us : for as much as his body, although it be glorious, cannot be in divers and many places at one time, but must be so in one place, after the nature of a glorified body, that it cannot be in another ; otherwise it should not be a true and natural body, but fantastical, that is to say, a thing apparent and not in deed, which is false and wholly against our faith : and therefore do I say and confess, that the true and natural body of Christ is in heaven, and that from thence he shall not come, until he hath made all his enemies his footstool, and then shall he come to judge the quick and the dead.

XXXVIII. I believe, that when the number of the elect children of God shall be accomplished, the Lord Jesus, in the self-same body in the which he suffered and was crucified, with the which he rose and ascended into heaven ; in the self-same shall he come with great power and majesty, visibly in a cloud, even as he ascended, and that to judge both the quick and the dead, and shall render unto every one according unto justice ; unto the good that he shall find among them according to their goodness,

and unto the evil according to their wickedness. This judgment shall be general ; that is to say, all shall be called and personally summoned thereunto by the voice of an angel, at the which all shall appear, as well the good as the evil, the elect as the reprobate ; to the end that everyone may render an account and reckoning before the judgment-seat of Christ, of all that hath been done by them in this world, whether it be good or evil, yea even of their idle words, the which they esteem no sin. Then shall be saved all those that are found written in the book of life.

XXXIX. I believe, that then shall be made the total and last separation of the good from the evil, of the elect from the reprobate ; the which now are all mingled together, as the good and the evil fish in one net, the chaff and the corn, and the cockle with the wheat : but when the harvest cometh, He, which hath the fan in his hand, shall make a separation, and shall gather the corn into his garner, but the chaff and cockle he shall cast into the fire to burn eternally. Then shall perfectly be declared and known the justice and mercy of the Lord, and likewise the fruit of the cross and blood of Jesus Christ, the which thing now we know only but in part ; but then the good and elect shall know the Father, upon whom they have builded their hope, and shall not be confounded ; and in like manner the wicked shall know the Father, against whom they have stumbled, and whom they have refused, contemned, and despised, and shall be confounded. Then shall the Lord make an end of his office and ministry : for his mystical body shall then wholly be finished and accomplished with all his members, and he shall render up his kingdom and his spouse, which is the church, unto God his Father, altogether glorious, irreprehensible, and acceptable, without spot or wrinkle.

Then shall perfectly be overcome, destroyed, and confounded, Satan and hell, sin and death, and all other adversaries of Christ, the which at present do yet exercise tyranny upon all his members, and hold them under their claws, chains, and bonds. But then we, as people ravished with joy, shall say this word which is written, “O death, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which hath given us victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

XL. I believe, that this marvellous, terrible, and fearful judgment unto the evil, wicked, and reprobate, is very much desired, and of great consolation unto the good, the faithful, and the elect; because that then their whole redemption, that is to say, of the body, shall be made an end of, and they shall receive the fruit of their labours. Then their innocence shall openly be declared and known to all the world, and they shall see the vengeance and condemnation of the wicked, which have used them tyrannously, afflicted and tormented them in this world; whose iniquity shall be manifested by the Lord, and shall be clearly known of all to their great confusion, and to the honour and glory of the righteous children of God, the which shall be in peace and perfect tranquillity, and shall have full rejoicing and fruition of all that he hath promised and prepared for all those that love him, the which no eye hath seen, no ear hath heard, neither can it be comprehended by the heart of man. Therefore do I abide this great day of retribution with a great desire, as the same which shall bring and shew unto me the self-same good thing.

XLI. I believe, that we shall not all die, but that we shall be changed in a moment; that is to say, that in this last day and judgment general, some shall be found alive, the which died not, neither shall they die, as concerning the separation of the

body from the soul, but shall continue alive eternally ; to the end that Christ may be known to be lord and judge of the living and dead, and that his grace and merits may be found greater than the sin of Adam. For as sin hath reigned unto death, so likewise must grace reign through Jesus Christ unto eternal life. The same nevertheless shall be changed and transformed from corruption unto incorruption, from mortality unto immortality, from contempt and ignominy unto glory, after such sort, that they shall be made partakers of all the gifts, graces, and benefits, the which the Lord shall give unto those that before were dead in him : the which shall not be before the others, but all together shall be taken up in the clouds, and in the air, and shall all together be with the Lord.

This is the second point of my faith touching Jesus Christ, the second person in Trinity, and of his restoring and repairing of man. Let us now come to the third point, which is of the Holy Ghost, by whom man (being restored) is maintained and preserved in his integrity and perfection.

THE THIRD ARTICLE.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

XLII. I believe, that the Holy Ghost is a divine person, distinct from the Father and the Son, proceeding from them both, in and through all things equal and co-eternal with them ; by the which Holy Ghost the church hath always been, is now, and shall be ruled, guided, directed, and governed unto the end of the world. By whom also the Saints, Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ have spoken. And therefore I do neither believe nor receive any other vicar or lieutenant to

Christ upon earth within his church, than the Holy Ghost, which cannot be received of the wicked.

XLIII. I believe, that the Holy Ghost is the pledge and earnest of our heavenly heritage, by the which we are assured, ascertained, and certainly assured in our consciences that we be the children of God, and brethren adoptives to Jesus Christ, and consequently coheirs of eternal life. The same Holy Ghost also is the finger of God, the which imprinteth in our hearts and spirits the faith of these things aforesaid. It sealeth and confirmeth the promises of the Lord within our hearts through his goodness and grace, because we should in no wise doubt.

XLIV. I believe, that this Holy Spirit, dwelling in us through his grace and virtue, doth regenerate us into a newness and change of living, mortifying in us all that is of us and of the old man, of the flesh and of the world, and quickening all that is his in us. So that we live not thenceforth after our own lusts, but according to the will of God; which Holy Ghost also worketh in us all good works, and doth reprove, rebuke, and condemn the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment.

XLV. I believe, that the Holy Ghost is the teacher of the ignorant, which teacheth, guideth, and leadeth us unto the knowledge of the truth; and by him only are we brought and delivered out of the darkness, and set in the perfect light. Likewise I believe, that he is the Comforter of the poor, afflicted, and persecuted; and in all their troubles, vexations, and adversities, doth so help, comfort, strengthen, and assist all such, that he will not suffer them to despair, as do the wicked and reprobate, but maketh them to taste and feel the sweetness, goodness, and mercy of God the Father, which by persecution and divers tribulations leadeth his own unto eternal glory.

XLVI. I believe, that this Holy Ghost is the spirit of life, which quickeneth all other spirits, as well heavenly as earthly, and that the same only of himself is holy, and that all others by him are made holy: so that if any spirits be holy (as there be) either in heaven or in earth, they are none otherwise holy but by the holiness of the same Holy Ghost, and that is the cause why I believe in him; that is to say, for that cause I put my whole faith, hope, trust, and affiance in him, even as I have said before of the Father and the Son. This is the third point of my faith, which is concerning the Holy Ghost, the third person in the holy Trinity; by the which Holy Ghost, after that we are made by the Father, and repaired and restored by the Son, we are maintained and governed unto the end. There remaineth now to entreat of the fourth point of my faith, which is concerning the church, and of the things that concern the same.

THE FOURTH ARTICLE.

I believe the holy catholic church, the communion of saints.

XLVII. I believe and confess one only catholic and universal church, which is a holy congregation and assembly of all faithful believers, which are chosen and predestinate unto everlasting life, before the foundations of the world were laid; of whose number I count myself, and believe that I am through the only grace and mercy of the Father, and by the merits of my good Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and not by means of my good works and merits, which indeed are none.

XLVIII. I believe, that this church is invisible to the eye of man, and is only to God known, and that the same church is not set, compassed, and limited

within a certain place or bounds, but is scattered and spread abroad, throughout all the world; but yet coupled together in heart, will, and spirit, by the bond of faith and charity, having and altogether acknowledging one only God, one only head and mediator Jesus Christ, one faith, one law, one baptism, one spiritual table, wherein one meat and one spiritual drink is ministered unto them, unto the end of the world. This church containeth in it all the righteous and chosen people, from the first righteous man unto the last that shall be found righteous in the end of the world: and therefore I call it universal. For as touching the visible church, which is the congregation of the good and of the wicked, of the chosen and of the reprobate, and generally of all those which say they believe in Christ, I do not believe that to be the church, because that church is seen of the eye, and the faith thereof is in visible things.

XLIX. I believe, that this invisible church is the field of the Lord God, wherein is neither darnel nor cockle. It is the house and dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost, and within that church is neither Cain, Judas, neither the wicked rich glutton. That church also is the fold of Christ, wherein there are no stinking and infected beasts, but all clean and undefiled sheep and lambs, which bring forth their fruits in due time and season. The same church is the body of Christ, wherein there is never a rotten, corrupt, or infected member. It is the spouse of Christ, which is pure and clean, without wrinkle and without spot. It is holy and without blame, cleansed and sanctified in the blood and by the word of her head and well-beloved spouse, Jesus Christ. And for that cause they can in no wise perish, which by lively faith are grafted therein.

L. I believe, that the gifts and graces of the Holy

Ghost are scattered and given unto every member of the same church, not so much for their particular profit and commodity, as for the general profit and commodity of the whole congregation and church, and that through grace wholly, without any merit, according to the good pleasure and providence of God, to some more and some less; and that to the end we should know that one hath need of another, and that we should be ready to keep one another in all necessities, as well bodily as spiritually, even as it becometh members of one body.

LI. I believe the communion of saints, that is to say, I believe, that all whatsoever our Lord God giveth in this world, whether it be benefits and blessings that concern the body or the spirit, he giveth the same singularly to the profit and commodity of the whole church, and therefore ought the same to be distributed and communicated to all that are faithful, but chiefly to those who are in necessity; that like as we do communicate and are knit in one God, one faith, one law, one baptism, and be partakers of one spiritual table; even so we may communicate and be partakers together of and in those things, which do proceed and come unto us, by means of the aforesaid things. For otherwise we cannot be Christians or faithful stewards of Christ. Here utterly I renounce and abhor the Anabaptists' manner of making common goods, wives, and such other like things, and only do I allow the Apostles' making of things common, which having and possessing any goods privately, used to distribute thereof to every one, according as the same had need, and as necessity required.

LII. I believe, that this church is like unto the ark of Noah, within the which is safety and life, and without the same is but death, decay, and destruction. For as Christ is and doth reign in his church,

even so Satan is and doth reign in and through all that are out of that church. The which true church is maintained and upholden by the Spirit of Christ, is ruled and governed by his holy word, and is nourished and fed with his holy sacraments. That church shall always have enemies, and shall still be tormented in the sea of this world with the thunderings of antichrist, and by the wounds and tempests of Satan: for all the gates of hell do arm and set out themselves against this church. But in these waves she shall not be drowned, but shall abide for ever, because she hath a good defence and foundation, which is Jesus Christ the righteous. And for this cause I call her the church militant, which waiteth for the triumph of those that be blessed, which are where is nothing but peace, joy, and everlasting consolation.

LIII. I believe, that the Lord God hath given us three principal signs and marks by the which we may know this his church, that is to say, the word, the sacraments, and discipline. I call that only the word, which was revealed by the Holy Ghost unto the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles of Jesus Christ; the which word is contained within the canonical books of the Old and New Testament; by the which word we are made clean, and thereby do receive the self-same thing, and as much as we do by the sacraments; that is to say, Jesus Christ by his word, which is the word of faith; who giveth and communicateth himself unto us, as well as by the sacraments, albeit it be by another manner and fashion.

LIV. I believe, that the same word of God is of a far greater authority than the church; the which word only doth sufficiently shew and teach us all those things, that in any wise concern our salvation; both what we ought to do, and what to leave undone.

The same word of God is the true pattern and perfect rule, after the which all faithful people ought to govern and order their lives, without turning either to the right hand or to the left hand, without changing any thing thereof, without putting to it, or taking from it, knowing that all the works of God are perfect, but most chiefly his word.

LV. I believe, that as only Jesus Christ amongst all men is holy and true, and that all others are sinners and liars; even so likewise the only doctrine of the same Jesus Christ is holy and true, and all other doctrines are impure and false. This doctrine of Jesus Christ is a well, a fountain of life, a lamp, or pillar of fire to guide us, the bread of the soul, and the power of God unto salvation, to all that believe. And therefore whatsoever happeneth; the same ought only to be advanced, preached, heard, understood, and received of all the world, to the comfort and salvation of those that believe, and to the greater damnation of the unbelievers, the wicked, and reprobate, that believe not. For, as the manna in the desert was to some sour, and to other some a good and pleasant meat; and as Christ is to some a stumbling-block to be offended at, and is appointed for the fall of the wicked, and the rising up of the godly: even so the word of the Gospel to some is a savour of death unto death, and to other some a savour of life unto life. The which word of the Gospel I receive and take only to be my guide, according to the same, to die and to live.

LVI. I believe, that the reading of the same word and Gospel ought not, neither can it be prohibited and forbidden from any manner of person, what estate, sort, or condition soever the same be of; but it ought to be common unto all the world, as well to men as women; yea and that in a vulgar or common language, which all do understand, because it is ordained and appointed for all. And likewise

the promises of God, which are therein contained, do appertain unto all. And therefore antichrist and his members do exercise great and cruel tyranny upon the faithful children of God, as well in that they take from them and utterly do forbid them to read the same word, and, instead thereof, set before them dreams, lies, canons, and damnable traditions: as also because upon pain of deadly sin and eternal damnation they both forbid and command things that indeed are but indifferent, which manner of theirs is the only note and mark to know antichrist by.

LVII. I believe, that this holy doctrine of the Gospel in the very time by God appointed was confirmed and approved by heavenly miracles, as well by Jesus Christ himself, the Prophets, and Apostles, as also by other good and faithful ministers of the same Gospel: and that after such a sort, that for confirming thereof, there is now no more need of new miracles; but rather we must content ourselves with that which is done, and simply and plainly believe only the holy Scriptures, without seeking any farther to be taught; watching and still taking heed to ourselves, that we be not beguiled and deceived with the false miracles of antichrist, wherewith the world at this day is stuffed; which miracles are wrought by the working of Satan, to confirm all kind of idolatry, errors, abuses, and iniquities, and thereby to blind the poor and ignorant: the which thing the Lord God suffereth justly to be done, because they would not receive the spirit of truth to be saved. Yea, God suffereth them to receive the spirit of lying, which hath power to deceive, to the end they should be damned, because they have allowed lying and iniquity, and have refused righteousness and truth. The true miracles then are wrought by the only power of God, for the confirming of his doctrine, and are wrought for the infidels' sake, and

not for the faithful. But the preaching and true receiving of the holy word of God is only given and ministered to the faithful, and to those that believe.

LVIII. I believe also the holy sacraments (which are the second mark and badge of the true church) to be the signs of the reconciliation and great atonement made between God and us, through Jesus Christ. They are seals of the Lord's promises, and are outward and visible pledges and gages of the inward faith; and are in number only twain, that is to say, baptism and the holy supper of the Lord. The which two are not void and empty signs, but full: that is to say, they are not only signs, whereby something is signified, but also they are such signs as do exhibit and give the thing that they signify indeed, as by God's help we will declare hereafter. But as touching all the other five sacraments which with great abuse and superstition are received and used in the papistical church, that is to say, confirmation, confession, marriage, absolution, otherwise called the sacrament of the priesthood, and extreme unction or anointing; I say, that all those were ecclesiastical ceremonies, the which the holy fathers in their time used holily without any superstition, even as by their example the same may be used at this day, so that it be done without any error, abuse, and superstition, and that in no wise it be hurtful to the Christian liberty of the Gospel, the which doth deliver our consciences from all outward beggarly ceremonies by man ordained and devised without the word of God.

LIX. I believe, that baptism is the sign of the new league and friendship between God and us, made by Jesus Christ; and it is the mark of Christians now in the time of the Gospel, as in time past circumcision was a mark unto the Jews which were under the law. Yea, baptism is an outward washing done with water, thereby signifying an inward wash-

ing of the Holy Ghost, wrought through the blood of Christ. The which baptism ought as well to be given and communicated to little children as to those that be great, according to Jesus Christ's ordinance, once for all, without any rebaptizing. This baptism is the Red Sea, wherein Pharaoh, that is to say, the devil, with his army of sins, are altogether drowned, and the Israelites pass through it safely; and afterward walking through the desert of this world in great sorrows, vexations, and troubles, do use daily for their comfort the heavenly manna, which is the holy word of God, until through death they may enter into the heavenly land of promise.

LX. I believe also, that baptism is the entry of the church, a washing unto a new birth, and a renewing of the Holy Ghost, whereby we do forsake ourselves, the devil, the flesh, sin, and the world. For being once rid of the old man, with all his concupiscences, we are clothed with the new man, which is Jesus Christ, in righteousness and holiness, and with him we die, and are buried in his death, to the end that with Christ we may rise from death to the glory of the Father. And even likewise being thus new born, we should walk in newness of life, always mortifying in us that which is of us, that thereby the body of sin may be utterly destroyed, and plucked up by the root.

LXI. I believe, that this baptism ought to be ministered, not with oil, salt, spittle, and such-like baggage, but only in clean and fair water; and that in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, according to the institution and ordinance of God, without changing any thing therein, putting any thing thereunto, or taking any thing therefrom; and the same also is to be used in a vulgar and common language, that all the people may understand. For whatsoever is done or said in the church of

Christ, ought to be understood and known of all that be faithful. By this baptism we are changed and altered from children of wrath, of sin, of the devil, and of destruction, into the children of God, of grace, and salvation : thereby to be made the lords, heirs, and coheirs with Christ of eternal life. And for that cause the same ought to be given and communicated only to reasonable creatures, which are apt and meet to receive such things, and not unto bells and such-like, which neither can receive nor use the thing signified by baptism.

LXII. I believe, that this baptism by water is not so necessary to salvation, that one may not be saved without it, in case of necessity. And likewise I doubt not in the salvation of little children, which die without baptism ; but that the same are saved in the faith of their parents, as well as if they were baptized, even as in time past, under the law, the little children dying without circumcision were saved in the faith of their parents. But this only do I understand of the children of the faithful, unto whom the promises of God do appertain, and not of the infidels and reprobate.

LXIII. I believe, that the holy sacrament of the supper is a holy and outward ceremony, instituted by Jesus Christ in the Gospel a day before his death, in the nature and substance of bread and wine, in remembrance and for a memorial of his death and passion, having and containing in it a promise of the remission of sins. By this sacrament we are indeed made partakers of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and be therewith nourished and fed in the house of the Lord, which is his church, after that into the same we are entered through baptism. The same ought to be given and ministered unto all under both the kinds, according to the ordinance and command-

ment of Christ, for the altering whereof none ought to be so hardy as to attempt any thing.

LXIV. I believe, that in this holy sacrament these signs and hadges are not changed in any point, but the same do remain wholly in their nature ; that is to say, the bread is not changed and transubstantiated (as the fond Papists and false doctors do teach; deceiving the poor) into the body of Jesus Christ, neither the wine transubstantiated into his blood ; but the bread remaineth still bread, and the wine remaineth still wine, every one in its proper and first nature. For the words that Christ spake to his disciples in giving them the bread, saying, " This is my body," I understand and believe to be spoken by a figurative manner of speech, called metonymia; which is a manner of speaking very common in the Scriptures ; as the same was understood and also declared by the writings of the holy fathers and doctors of the church, Irenæus, Cyprian, Tertullian, Ambrose, Austin, Chrysostom, and other like, which lived before the council of Lateran, when it was concluded that the bread was transubstantiated into the body of Christ, and the wine into his blood ; and then was it given forth as an article of our faith, to the great dishonour of God, and to the great slander of all the church. And it was done in the year of our Lord 1050, by Pope Leo the Ninth : in the which time the devil was unbound, as it was prophesied of in the Apocalypse, and troubled the church of Christ more than ever he did before.

LXV. I believe, that all this sacrament consisteth in the use thereof ; so that without the right use the bread and wine in nothing differ from other common bread and wine that are commonly used ; and therefore I do not believe that the body of Christ can be contained, hid, or inclosed, in the bread, under the bread, or with the bread ; neither the blood in the

wine, under the wine, or with the wine. But I believe and confess the very body of Christ to be in heaven, on the right hand of the Father (as before we have said), and that always and as often, as we use this bread and wine, according to the ordinance and institution of Christ, we do verily and indeed receive his body and blood.

LXVI. I believe, that this receiving is not done carnally or bodily, but spiritually, through a true and lively faith; that is to say, the body and blood of Christ are not given to the mouth and belly for the nourishing of the body, but unto our faith, for the nourishing of the spirit and inward man unto eternal life. And for that cause we have no need that Christ should come from heaven to us, but that we should ascend unto him, lifting up our hearts through a lively faith on high unto the right hand of the Father, where Christ sitteth, from whence we wait for our redemption; and we must not seek for Christ in these bodily elements.

LXVII. I believe, that this holy supper is a sacrament of faith unto the faithful only, and not for the infidels: wherein a man findeth and receiveth no more than he bringeth with him, saving peradventure the increase of faith, grace, and virtue. And therefore they only find and receive Jesus Christ unto salvation, which through true and lively faith bring the same with them: but the others find and receive only the outward and visible signs, and that to their condemnation, as Judas and other such-like wicked and reprobate.

LXVIII. I believe, that this sacrament containeth two things: the one is earthly, carnal, and visible; and the other is heavenly, spiritual, and invisible. And I confess, that as our body and outward man receiveth the thing that is earthly and visible, which is the bread and the wine, whereby the body is nou-

rished and fed : even so verily our spirit and inward man receiveth the thing that is heavenly and spiritual ; which is signified by the bread and wine ; that is to say, the body and blood of Christ, after such sort that thereby we are become one with him, bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh, and made partakers with him of all righteousness and all other virtues, gifts, and graces, the which the eternal Father hath bestowed on him.

LXIX. I believe, that the holy fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, and all other faithful and good people that are gone before us, and have died in the faith, through the word and faith, saw Him beforehand, which was to come, and received as much and the same thing that we receive by the sacraments. For they were of the self-same church, faith, and law, that we be of. They were as well Christians as we, and used the same sacraments in figure, that we use in truth.

LXX. I believe, that to this holy table only those that are faithful, and are truly contrite and penitent, ought to be admitted, and that all such as are unworthy should be refused, for fear of defiling and contaminating the holy meats, the which the Lord giveth not, but unto the faithful and to those of his own household. I call those unworthy, which are infidels, idolaters, blasphemers, despisers of God, heretics, and all others that make sects to divide themselves from the people, thereby to break the unity of the church ; all that are perjured, all that resist and are disobedient to their father, mother, and superiors ; all seditious persons, murderers, quarrellers, sowers of discord, whoremongers, thieves, covetous persons, drunkards, gluttons, and generally all those that lead a wicked and a slanderous life. For such manner of people have no part nor portion in the kingdom of God ; and for that cause, such

ought to be cast and thrust out of the church. For with such it is not lawful to keep any company, to eat, drink, or to have any friendship, except it be for the winning of them and bringing of them to repentance.

LXXI. I believe, that the popish mass is not, neither can be, the holy supper of the Lord ; but the mere invention of men, which were both liars and wicked ; yea it is as contrary to the holy supper, as the night is unto the day, and Belial to Christ ; as it may appear to all people more clear than the noon-day, by conferring and comparing the institution of the holy supper (as the same is recited and written by the Evangelist, and especially by the Apostle St. Paul), unto the celebration of the mass. And therefore the mass can be no remembrance of true sacrifice, - that is to say, of the death and passion of Christ, as the holy supper is : but the mass is an utter forsaking of the same, because it doth attribute and ascribe to itself that which doth appertain only to the blood of Christ shed upon the cross, that is to say, satisfaction, purgation, and remission of sins, with the increase of grace ; and because men are compelled to do godly honour unto the creature instead of the Creator, to a morsel of bread in the stead of Jesus Christ our only Lord, Saviour, and Redeemer.

LXXII. I believe, that the third mark or cognizance of the church, which is ecclesiastical discipline, is very commodious and profitable, yea, and very necessary to the Catholic church, for the comfort of the good, and for the punishment of the evil ; the which also I do receive, and to the same do submit myself, because I know that it is the ordinance of Christ in his church, and in like manner the same was practised by the Apostles in the primitive church, and that because all things should be done decently

and in good order, which is a thing decent and necessary for every congregation.

LXXIII. I believe, that the power to bind and loose, to excommunicate and to absolve, which is commonly called the keys of the church, is given of God not to one or two, or to some particular person, but to the whole church; that is to say, to all the faithful and believers in Christ; not for to destroy, undo, or cast away, but to edify and to advance all. And therefore I say and confess that excommunication and absolution ought not, neither can be given at the will and pleasure of some particularly, but by the consent of all the church; or at the least, by the greater or most sound part of the same, when they be congregated and assembled together in the name of Christ, and the same to be done with prayer.

LXXIV. I believe, that this excommunication exercised and executed rightly, according as Jesus Christ hath declared and commanded the same in the Gospel, is of so great authority, strength, and power, that it may shut up heaven from men in such wise, that all those that are worthily excommunicated, are cast out of the church militant, and also shall be cast out of the church triumphant; which is heaven, except they repent. It is the sword which is so sharp as to cut off the rotten members of Christ's mystical body, which is his church. It is the key to shut up the heavens from the wicked. It is a rod to chasten them, which nevertheless is not used to confound them, but as a spiritual medicine to amend them, to receive them again, to make them whole, and bring them again to the same estate from the which they are fallen.

LXXV. I believe, that this excommunication, which is the last rod of the church, ought not, neither can be exercised toward any manner of person, who first hath not received and professed the

false serving of God, to destroy the kingdom of antichrist, and all false doctrine, to promote the glory of God, and to advance the kingdom of Christ, to cause the word of the Gospel every where to be preached, and to maintain the same unto death; to chasten also and to punish the false prophets which lead the poor people after idols and strange gods, and instead of the Gospel preach and teach the fables and traditions of men, to the dishonour of God and Christ his Son, and to the great decay of the whole church, To such a magistrate, every person, of what estate, degree, or condition soever he be, ought to be subject, and him in all honest and reasonable things to obey, because he representeth the person of a great Lord, before whom every knee ought to bow; and the same must not be forgotten in our prayers, to the end that the Lord may vouchsafe to guide and direct all his ways, and that under him we may live in godly peace and tranquillity.

LXXX. I believe, that the magistrate, as also the use of oaths and such-like, is the ordinance of the Lord, for to lead the imperfection of man in his corrupt nature after his fall. The which the faithful, after that he hath essayed all other means, may solely and justly use in matters of controversy which may chance between him and his neighbour, to restore order, and to make peace in all things. And therefore he that in necessity will not use this way, ought rather to be judged an Anabaptist * than a Christian.

* The Anabaptists, at the time of the Reformation, were a sect principally distinguished by the following tenets:

That Christ was not the Son of Mary, nor true God.

That we are righteous by our merits and sufferings.

That there is no original sin.

That infants ought not to be baptized.

That there should be no magistrates.

That oaths ought never to be taken, or imposed.

That

LXXXI. I believe, that the magistrate holily may minister an oath unto the faithful in judgment for the knowledge of the truth, and to make an end of all controversies and matters in variance between man and man : the which oath ought to be taken in the only name of the living God, because it is the third commandment of the first table. And albeit the perfection required to be in a Christian, ought simply to use yea, yea, and nay, nay, without any swearing; nevertheless the faithful may holily use an oath in place and time with discretion, and in the fear of the Lord, for things honest, just, and true; for the verifying of the truth, when the honour of God or the saving of a man's neighbour dependeth upon it, or else not. For the man that accustometh to swear shall be filled with iniquity, and his house shall not be without the plague. And I confess also; that as every oath, vow, and promise made according to God's word, be it to God or to man, doth bind, and ought to be kept and observed without breaking; even so those that are made without, and contrary to God's word and commandment, as are the religious vows and such-like, which promise things impossible and contrary to the word of God, do not bind a man in any wise, but with a good conscience may be violated and broken—for in wicked promises and in foolish and indiscreet vows, the faithful, wise, and sage may change their purpose.

That a community of goods should be maintained.

That polygamy should be allowed to Christians.

That the godly should enjoy a monarchy here on earth.

That any man may preach and administer the sacraments.

The modern English Baptists, or (as a more just and appropriate term of discrimination) Anti-pædo-baptists, are a denomination of Protestant dissenters, totally unconnected with the ancient Anabaptists, except in the maintenance of the fourth of the foregoing articles.—Ed.

LXXXII. I do believe and confess, that marriage is an honourable estate amongst all men, and the bed undefiled is holy and ought not to be broken; It is instituted and ordained of God for the bringing forth of children, and to eschew fornication; from the which estate of marriage none ought, nor can be restrained, if there be no just and lawful hindrance by the word of God; but the same ought to be free to every body, of what estate, sort, or condition soever the same be. And for that cause, all, whosoever they be, men or women, which have not the gift of continency, ought to marry, to the intent, the temple of the Holy Ghost, that is to say, our bodies, may not be polluted and defiled.

LXXXIII. I believe also, that the forbidding of marriage for certain persons, likewise the forbidding of certain meats, the difference of days, garments, and such-like, is the devilish doctrine of antichrist, and wholly against the Christian liberty of the Gospel taught by Jesus Christ, the which delivereth us from all outward ceremonies of the law, and setteth us at liberty to use all things with giving God thanks: so that it be not done to the hurt of our neighbour. For all things are made holy by the word of God and prayer to Him that knoweth and receiveth the truth. Therefore to compel Christians to these things, is but to take from them and to rob them of their Christian liberty, and by tyranny to set them under the curse of the law, from the which Christ by his death and passion hath delivered them: and it is one true mark and note to know antichrist by.

LXXXIV. I believe, that the pure and true service of God doth not consist in these ceremonies and outward things, neither in babbling much and mumbling of long prayers; but in spiritual things, as lively and true faith in God and his word taught

by Jesus Christ his only Son, which is of power, and worketh, through charity toward our neighbour, true and perfect calling upon God's name, with due obedience to his commandments, in humbleness of spirit, according to his word. For as God is a spirit, so will he be worshipped and served in spirit and truth.

LXXXV. I believe, that all God's services without God's word and contrary to his commandment are idolatry and iniquity; I call idolatry, after the fashion of the Prophets, not only that which is done unto the honour of an idol or strange god, but also that which is done to the honouring of the living God, contrary to his word and commandment. And therefore they are not only idolaters which worship and serve idols and strange gods, as the ethnics and such-like; but also those which worship and serve the true God of heaven after their own fantasy or after the traditions of men, without faith, without the word of God, and otherwise than God hath commanded them. And they only are Christians, which do confess and serve one only God, which is in heaven, according to his word and commandment, all whose works, as well outward as inward, corporal as spiritual, be the true service of the Lord, because the same are done in the faith of the Son of God, and according to the calling of the Lord, after the which every faithful body ought to walk.

LXXXVI. I believe and confess, that it is not lawful for a Christian to be present either in spirit either in body at the idolatrous sacrifices, neither to enter into their temples, whilst they are in doing of their idolatries and sacrifices, if it be not on purpose to rebuke and declare their impiety, and to teach the truth, as the holy Prophets and Apostles did, and not to dissemble, as the hypocrites do. For if the body be the creature of God (as it is indeed), as

well as the soul, and be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and a member of the mystical body of Christ; and if it shall one day rise, and possess eternal life with the soul, it must then follow of necessity, that it ought to be wholly dedicated unto the right service of God in this world, together with the soul and the spirit; or else they cannot at the general resurrection be coupled together, but must be separated asunder, the one to be with God in heaven, whom it loved, and the other to be in hell with the devil, whom it served: the which thing is impossible; and for that cause I say, that all such dissimulation is a plain forsaking of Christ and of his Gospel. Likewise I believe and confess, that all manner of such distemblings, by the which the truth of the Gospel is hid, the word of the Lord despised, infidelity and ignorance confirmed, and the weak are offended; the same cannot be of God, but of the devil, and altogether against the truth of God's word. And therefore there must be no halting on both sides, but we must go and walk forth right and straightly before this great Lord, which seeth, beholdeth, and knoweth all things, yea even before they are begun.

LXXXVII. I believe also, that the beginning of all idolatry was the finding out and invention of images, which also were made to the great offence of the souls of men, and are as snares and traps for the feet of the ignorant, to make them fall. Therefore they ought not to be honoured, served, worshipped, neither suffered to be in the temples or churches, neither in any other places, where Christian people do meet together to hear and understand the word of God; but rather the same ought utterly to be taken away and thrown down, according to the effect of the second commandment of God, and that ought to be done by the common authority of the magistrate, and not by the private authority of any parti-

cular man. For the wood of the gallows, whereby justice is done, is blessed of God ; but the image made by man's hand is accursed of the Lord, and so is he that made it. And therefore we ought to beware of images above all things.

This is what I believe of the catholic faith and of the things that concern the same, and is for the fourth part of my faith. Now it resteth to speak of the fruits that proceed out of the same, and what I receive by the same faith ; which fruits are in number three, whereof the first is,

The Forgiveness of Sins.

LXXXVIII. I believe, that all those that are come and shall come of the race and line of Adam, generally are conceived and born in iniquity and corruption (except Jesus Christ only), and that they are all sinners, transgressors, and breakers of the law and will of the Lord ; and according to their nature they are corrupt, the children of wrath, worthy of God's judgment, of condemnation, eternal death, all needing the grace and mercy of God and of Christ's blood-shedding. For God hath wrapped all under sin, to the intent he would have mercy upon all through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LXXXIX. I believe, that the knowledge of sin proceedeth of the law, but the remission and forgiveness of sin cometh of the Gospel, and is given us by the only grace and mercy of God in the blood of Jesus Christ, through the faith we have therein ; whereby we are counted righteous before God, not through our good works or deservings, neither by the merits of any other creature, either in heaven or in earth. For I know not, neither do I allow any other merits, but the merits of my good Lord ; Master, and only Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath merited and sufficiently satisfied for us, and hath

paid for his own their debt, in wiping out the handwriting and obligation which was against us ; and in taking the same from us, hath fastened it unto the cross.

XC. I believe, that this justifying faith is a mere and singular gift of God, the which is commonly given by the hearing of God's word, whereupon only it is built, and not upon the doctrines and traditions of men. I call a justifying faith a certain assurance and earnest persuasion of the good will, love, grace, bounteousness, and mercy of God toward us, whereby we are assured and verily persuaded in our hearts of the mercy, favour, and good will of God the Father ; that he is on our side, and for us, against all that are against us, and that he will be a merciful Father unto us, pardoning our sins, and will give us his grace, make us his children by adoption, and admit us for heirs unto eternal life ; and all this freely in his Son, and by his only Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and not for our merits or good works. This faith can do all things, and to it nothing is impossible : the which faith is never perfect nor great enough in us, and therefore ought we always to pray with the Apostles, saying, Lord, increase our faith, help our unbelief. For that faith only doth comfort us, maketh us holy, maketh us righteous and acceptable before the Lord ; it declareth us to be the children of God and heirs of eternal life : the which faith also is the mother, the spring, and root of all good works, like as infidelity is the fountain and root of all wickedness.

XCI. I believe also, that good works are not superfluous, vain, and unprofitable, but necessary to salvation. I call good works, not those that are done after the fantasy or commandment of men, but only those that God by his word hath commanded to be done ; the which ought to be done, not to deserve or merit any thing thereby at God's hand, or by the

same to escape eternal condemnation : but only because God hath commanded them, and that they might testify the love that we have unto our Lord, and our obedience to his holy word and commandment ; and to the intent that in and by us he might be glorified, and that our neighbours, as well the infidels and unbelievers, as the faithful, might thereby be edified. And in like manner they are to shew and to manifest the faith that we have in God and in his word, as the good tree sheweth itself, and is known by its fruit. Yea, and they are to make sure and certain unto us our calling, election, and predestination. To these ends serve all the good works commanded by God ; and whosoever doeth them to any other end, doth misuse them, sinneth, and doeth injury to the blood of Christ, and dishonoureth God and his word, for in so doing he declareth Christ died in vain.

XCII. I believe, that there is none, either in this world or in the other world, either in heaven or in earth, which can forgive me and pardon my sins, but only God, which hath given power and authority to the ministers of his word, to declare to all faithful believers, which are of a contrite heart, and be truly penitent, that all their sins, through the free mercy of God, are forgiven them through the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for them : yea, to declare unto them that they are pardoned of their sins ; and that the same is done by the ministry of the word of the holy church, in the which this remission is exhibited and given, and not otherwise. But on our part is required perfect repentance, the which hath two parts : the first is contrition, that is to say, the acknowledging, hating, and abhorring of sin : the which thing is administered by the law, and bringeth us to despair, if on the contrary we be not holpen with a lively faith and the mercy of God the Father through the blood of Jesus Christ, which proceedeth out of

the Gospel. This faith comforteth us, maketh us steadfast, and causeth us to find favour before the judgment-seat of God.

XCIII. I believe, that sin dwelleth still in man, yea in the very saints and children of God after their new birth through baptism and the Holy Ghost: the which sin nevertheless shall not be laid to their charge, because of the faith they have in Jesus Christ. For as all the sins of the infidels and reprobate be damnable, and shall not be pardoned, because of their infidelity: even so all the sins of the faithful and chosen be venial sins, and forgiveable, because of their faith. And therefore I believe, that there is one only sin that is mortal and irremissible, which is unbelief or infidelity, that is to say, not to believe in the Son of God. For where true faith in Christ is found, then all sins are hid, covered, and pardoned.

I believe the resurrection of the flesh, which is the second fruit of my faith.

XCIV. I believe, that there shall be one resurrection, which shall be generally to all the world, as well of the good as of the bad, which shall be in the end of the world by the power of Christ, and through the ministry of the angels, the which with a great voice of a trumpet shall call together all the world before the Lord, and shall gather together the elect and chosen from the four winds, even from the highest of the heavens unto the ends of the earth, and divide the evil from the good; and the wicked shall they cast into the fiery furnace, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth: and then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and shall be together, and be companions with the angels of God. This is the second resurrection, and blessed is he that shall have part or por-

tion therein, for the same shall not be touched with the second death.

XCV. I believe, that this resurrection shall be of the flesh, and not of the spirit, that is to say, that the spirit or soul of man shall not rise, because it is immortal, and dieth not. But the body, which before, as well by the reason of nature, as also because of sin, was subject unto death and corruption, to rot and to be brought to ashes, shall be raised up, and shall be coupled with its own proper soul and spirit, and shall be set in a more perfect estate than that in which the first man was before he sinned, and shall be clearly exempted from all manner of corruption of sin, and so consequently from all manner of imperfections, and shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.

XCVI. I believe, that I shall arise not in any other man's flesh and body, but in mine own that I brought out of my mother's womb, even with the self-same body and bones that I have at this present, but the same altered and changed; made of mortal, immortal; of corruptible, incorruptible; of vile and contemptible, glorious. And therefore I do wait for the coming of my Saviour Jesus Christ: the which, through his power, will change my vile body, which was but a cast-away, to make it like unto his own glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to subject all things to himself.

I believe eternal life, which is the third and last fruit of my faith.

XCVII. I believe, that I shall rise (as I have said) with all the faithful and elect, not to die any more, as did they that miraculously were raised up from death, as well by Christ, the Apostles, and Prophets, and such others, but unto a life that is immortal, everlasting, and shall endure for ever, to reign eternally.

with God both in body and soul.. And thereof I am sure and doubt nothing at all, knowing that whosoever doubteth of his salvation by Christ, the same shall not be saved. Therefore as I am sure and certain that Christ is dead, and risen again for me, and therein do not doubt, even so am I sure and certain of my salvation wrought by him, and that without fail I shall be saved, and by him shall enter into eternal life.

XCVIII. I believe, that then I shall see him face to face, whom now I see as through the glass of faith, and then shall know him perfectly, whom now I know but in part : who after that he hath destroyed and confounded all his adversaries, and hath made them his footstool, shall make all things new, for the glory of those that are his. Then shall he be a whole God in all, and over all things. Then shall none teach his brother, saying, Know the Lord ; for then all shall know him, from the greatest unto the least.

XCIX. I believe also, that as the spirits of the infidels, wicked, and reprobate, after they are departed from their bodies, immediately do go to hell unto everlasting fire, their bodies nevertheless abiding in the earth, corrupting and rotting : even so likewise the souls and spirits of the faithful and chosen children of God, immediately after they do depart from their bodies, without any tarrying, are on high in heaven, to be in glory with the Lord, and there do still wait with an earnest desire for the coming and whole redemption of their bodies, the which they have left rotting and corrupting in the earth ; the which thing they shall obtain at the last day, and not before. Therefore I refute the fond opinion of the sleepers, which affirm that the spirits of the saints are not yet in heaven, but do sleep in a certain place unknown to us, until they shall receive their bodies at the last day, at which day the mystical body of

Christ, wholly, perfectly, and fully, must enter into glory.

C. I believe for a conclusion, that as the saints and the blessed, when the judgment is ended, shall go with Christ triumphantly through the air in body and soul, to dwell everlastingly in glory with him and his angels ; even so the wretched, wicked, and miserable damned shall go to hell in body and soul, with the devil and his angels, eternally to dwell and to be tormented with him in the fire of hell, which never shall be quenched, where shall be continual weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, with such as be stung to the quick with the worm that never shall die. From the which the Lord God, of his great mercy and grace, vouchsafe to preserve and keep us. Amen.

and shall go to hell in body and soul, with the
and his people eternally to dwell and to be
but who turn in the day of hell, when every shall
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(with the Lord God, of his great mercy and grace)
shall to preserve and keep us. Amen.

CERTAIN COMFORTABLE
E X P O S I T I O N S

OF THE

CONSTANT MARTYR OF CHRIST

JOHN HOOPER,

BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND WORCESTER,

Written in the Time of his Tribulation and Imprisonment,

UPON

THE 23D, 62D, 73D, AND 77TH

PSALMS

OF THE

PROPHET DAVID.

Whoso continueth to the end, shall be saved.

MATT. xxiv. 13.

At London : Printed by Henry Middleton, Anno 1580.

REPRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL COPY.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

THE ARGUMENT OR MATTER WHICH THE PROPHET
CHIEFLY INTREATETH OF IN THIS PSALM.

It should seem, by the marvellous and wonderful description and setting forth of Almighty God by the Prophet and King David in this Psalm, that he was inflamed with the Holy Ghost, being delivered from all his enemies, to declare unto the world how faithful and mighty a defender and keeper God is of as many as put their trust in him. He was in great danger, and specially in the wars that he made against the Ammonites, the event and success whereof it seemeth, by the 20th Psalm, his subjects greatly feared: wherefore they commended their King (as true subjects always use) with earnest prayer unto God. And that battle, and many other dangers more, ended (wherein the godly King found always the protection and defence of the heavenly Father ready and at hand), now being at rest, he would have this merciful defence of God known to all others, that as he, in all his adversities, put his trust in the Lord, and had the over-hand of all his enemies; even so, by his example, all other men should learn to do the same, and assure themselves to find, as he found, the Lord of Heaven to be the succour and defence of the troubled, and their keeper from all evil.

And because the hearers and readers of this his most divine and godly hymn should the better understand the same, and the sooner take credit thereof in the heart, he calleth the heavenly Father (the God of all consolation), in this Psalm, a shepherd or herdman feeding his flock; and the people, with himself, he calleth sheep pastured and fed by the

shepherd. And by these two means, as by a most convenient allegory or translation meet for the purpose, from the office of a shepherd and the nature of sheep, he setteth out marvellously the safeguard of man by God's providence and good-will towards man. And in the same allegory or translation he occupieth the four first verses in this Psalm. In the first verse, and so to the end of the Psalm, he declareth still one matter and argument of God's defence towards man, and how man is preserved; but yet it seemeth that he expresseth the same by other words and by another translation, shewing the nature of God Almighty, in feeding and nourishing of man, under the name of a Lord or King, that hath prepared a table and plenty of meats to feed the hungry and needy; and setteth forth man poor, and destitute of consolation and necessary help, under the name of guests and bidden folks to a king's table, where is plenty of all things necessary not only to satisfy hunger and to quench thirst, but also to expel and remove them, that the poor man shall never hunger nor thirst again; and not only that, but also for ever, world without end, this poor man shall dwell and inherit, by the mercy of his heavenly King, the joys everlasting. And this last translation or allegory is in manner not only a repetition of the first in other words, but also a declaration and more plain opening of the Prophet's mind, what he meaneth in this celestial hymn.

THE FIRST PART OF THE PSALM.

WHO IS IT THAT HATH THE CURE AND CHARGE OF
MAN'S LIFE AND SALVATION.

Ver. 1. The Lord feedeth me, and I shall want nothing.

KING David saith, the Lord feedeth him; wherefore he can lack nothing to live a virtuous and godly life.

In this first part some things are to be considered: first, of God that feedeth; and next, of man that is fed. God that feedeth, David calleth by the name of a "shepherd," and his people he calleth by the name of "sheep." By this name of a shepherd the Prophet openeth and discloseth the nature of God to all his miserable and lost creatures, that he is content, not only to wish and desire man that is lost, to be found and restored again; but also doth seek and travail to restore and bring him home again: as it is written in Isaiah the Prophet (chap. xl.), "He shall gather together his lambs in his arm." And in Ezekiel the Prophet (chap. xxxiv.) the Lord saith, "Behold, I will require my flock of the shepherds, &c.. And I will deliver my flock from their mouth, and they shall be no more their meat: for thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will search out my sheep, and will visit them as a shepherd doth visit his sheep when he is in the midst of his scattered sheep; so will I visit my sheep, and deliver them from all places where they have been scattered," &c. And Jeremy the Prophet (chap. xxxi.) in the same sort declareth the nature of God towards the lost flock, saying: "He that dispersed Israel shall gather him together again, and keep him as the shepherd keepeth his flock." Christ our Saviour nameth himself a good shepherd, and saith (John, x.), that he was sent to call such as were not sheep of the outer mark and sign in the world, to be his sheep. This nature of the heavenly Father saw King David, when he said at the beginning of this heavenly hymn, "The Lord feedeth me," &c.

When he is assured of God's merciful nature, that seeketh the lost sheep, he openeth further the nature of God, what he will do with the sheep which he findeth; feed him (saith the Prophet David), and putteth himself for an example. Here

is the mercy of the great Shepherd further declared, that he killeth not his sheep, robbeth them not, but feedeth and nourisheth them. Of this speaketh the Prophet Ezekiel (chap. xxxiv.) in the person of Almighty God : " I myself will feed my sheep, and make that they shall rest quietly, saith the Lord God. That which is lost I will seek, such as go astray I will bring again, such as be wounded I will bind up, such as be weak I will make strong ; but such as be fat and strong, those will I root out ; and I will feed my sheep in reason and judgment." And the great Shepherd Christ saith (John, x.), whether his sheep go in or out, they shall find pasture.

After that this King hath opened in this hymn, that God's nature is not only to seek the lost sheep, but also, when he hath found him, to feed him ; then he addeth in this hymn, after what sort he feedeth him : " So that I shall lack nothing," saith the Prophet. Here is the declaring of the great Shepherd's pasture, wherewith he feedeth the flock of his pasture. Christ expresseth the same wonderfully, in the opening of his office and doctrine unto the world in St. John (x. 4, 5), saying ; " I came that they might have life, and have it most abundantly." And talking with the poor woman of Samaria, he told her that the drink he would give her should be water of life. And to the Capernaïtes he said, that meat which he would give them should work eternal salvation. As these properties be in God the Shepherd (as the Prophet hath marked), even in the like sort be the contrary conditions in man, the sheep he speaketh of ; for as the nature of God is to seek, so is the nature of man to go astray. As the Prophet saith (Psalm cxix.), " I have strayed like a wandering sheep." And even so doth Isaiah write of all mankind (chap. liii.): " All we have erred, as sheep

going astray." Christ our Saviour also, in St. Matthew (chap. ix.), doth bewail the people of the world, that stray as sheep that had no shepherd. St. Peter likewise saith unto his countrymen that he writeth unto (1 Ephes. ii.), "Ye were as sheep that went astray; but ye be converted now unto the Shepherd and Pastor of your souls." As the nature of man is to stray from God, so is it likewise to feed upon all unwholesome and infected pastures: to believe every false prophet that can do nothing but lie, (1 Kings, xxi.) In the Prophet Isaiah (chap. xxviii.) the Lord saith, "The nature of sheep is to be deceived, and their pastors to be drunk, that neither know nor see the pastures of the word of God." And in the same Prophet (chap. xxix.) there is a most horrible plague upon man for sin; for, "The pastors shall be unable to feed, and all the food of life shall be as a book fast clasped and shut."

This going astray and feeding upon evil pasture, is wonderfully set forth by St. Paul (2 Thes. ii.): for when men will not feed upon the truth, it is God's just judgment they should feed upon falsehood. And as God's nature is not only to feed, but fully to satisfy and to replenish with all goodness, so that nothing may lack for a godly and virtuous life (John, iv.); in like manner, the nature of man is not only to feed, but also to replenish itself with all infected and contagious doctrine, until such time that he despise and condemn God and all his wholesome laws. (Rom. i.) This we may see in the holy Prophet Isaiah: "The people (saith the Lord) provoketh me unto anger, a lying nation, that will not hear the law of God; they say to their prophets, Prophesy not, look not out for us things that be right, speak pleasant things unto us," &c. (Chap. xxx.) And this replenishing of man with corrupt pasture, is horribly set forth in St. John (chap. viii.),

when the wicked priests and Pharisees would not believe the Shepherd's voice, Christ, no not their own servants that told them the truth, nor yet Nicodemus, one of their own court and profession. Thus in the first part of this celestial hymn, is the nature of God and man described, under the name of a shepherd and of sheep.

Of this part of the Psalm, what the Prophet hath said of God and of man, we must, for our doctrine and learning, gather some things to be the better by; for St. Paul saith, "Whatsoever is written, is written for our learning." Two things we learn of this first place: the one, a certainty that God hath the cure and charge of us: and the other, a consolation and comfort, that we and all ours be under his protection and governance. The first doctrine, to be certain and sure of God's defence, and care over us, maketh us constant and strong to suffer and bear all adversities and troubles that God shall send us. And the second doctrine shall cause us patiently and thankfully to bear our cross, and to follow Christ. Both these doctrines the Prophet David expresseth in the third and fourth verse of this Psalm: "If I should (saith he) travel and pass through places contagious and infected, where appeareth nothing but the image and shadow of death, or be compelled to pass through the hands and tyranny of mine enemies, I will not fear; for thou art with me, O God, and defendest me." In the 91st Psalm he setteth forth the assurance and felicity of all them that put their whole trust in the mercy of God; and therein also the Prophet reckoneth up a wonderful sort of dangers, and layeth them before the eyes of the faithful, that he may, by the sight and knowledge of the dangers, fix and place the more constantly his faith and trust in God, that hath the charge and cure of him: "He shall (saith he)

defend us from pestilence most infective : from flying arrows in the day," &c. By the which the Prophet understandeth all kind of evils, that may come unto us by the means of the devil or of wicked men ; and these things the faithful shall escape (saith the Prophet), because they say from their hearts unto God, " For thou art my hope ;" even as he said in the beginning of this Psalm, " The Lord feedeth me, and I shall want nothing." Such certainty and assurance of God's defence, and such consolation in troubles of this life, we must learn and pray to have out of God's word, or else it were as good never to hear nor to read it.

And from this first part of the Psalm every estate of the world may learn wisdom and consolation. If the Lord feed and govern him, he shall have God to his master and teacher, that shall give him wholesome and commodious doctrine, meet for the state of that life he hath chosen to live in this world. For all that shall be saved in time to come, follow not one kind of life. Some be magistrates and rulers, and appointed to see both the laws of the realm, and the goods and commodities thereof, to be used and applied to the use and profit of such as be under them. Some give themselves to study and contemplation of heavenly and divine things, not busying themselves with travails of the body, but to know themselves the way of life, and to be teachers of the same to others. Some be given to apply the laws of the commonwealth : some to exercise the trade and course of merchandise : some one kind of living, and some other. But of what art, faculty, science, or kind of living soever he be, that is not contrary to God's honour or honesty, he may use therein to serve God, to observe justice, to exercise truth, keep temperance, and be acceptable to God, who hath given laws meet and

convenient, to publicans and soldiers, servants and masters, parents and children, husbands and wives, and so to all others. But all these sorts of people must assuredly know, that in every of these vocations be more dangers, than he that must live in them is able to bear; therefore, from the bottom of his heart, he must be assured of this beginning of King David's hymn: "The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing." And indeed the Lord hath not only said he will feed and defend him from all dangers; but also saith, he will teach him how to live virtuously and reverently towards God, and honestly and quietly towards man, what state or vocation soever he choose to live in, so it be not against God's laws, and the law of nature. So saith King David: "God hath appointed a law, to rule and teach the man that feareth him whatsoever kind of living he appointeth himself to live in." (Psalm xxv.) What treasure is there to be compared unto this, that man is not only fed and maintained by God, but also taught and instructed in every craft and science that he appointeth himself to live in? Blessed therefore is the man, that in the entrails and deep cogitations of his heart can say, believe, and feel this to be true that David saith: "The Lord ruleth me, and careth for me, and I shall lack nothing."

But yet there is almost nothing spoken, that this King would have chiefly known. Howbeit doubtless they be wonderful things, that preserve and teach all persons, both men and women; in whatsoever kind of living honestly they appoint themselves to live in. He himself knew this to be true right well, as it appeareth when he saith: "Blessed be the Lord my strength, that taught my hands to battle" (Psalm cxliv.): for if the Lord had not taught and ruled him, he had been overthrown many times, because there was not only more strength

than he had of himself against him, but also more wit, more policy, more experience.

But what things can overcome that man, that is covered with this shield, The Lord ruleth me? Doubtless, nothing at all, whether it be in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in hell under the earth. Notwithstanding, this is not all that this doctrine, the Lord ruleth me, doth for the poor sheep that is ruled. But here must the reader and hearer of this Psalm follow King David, and desire to have the eye of his mind purged and made clean: for if the scales of infidelity, and the love and delight to sin remain, or else the mind be otherwise occupied than upon the understanding of the hymn; he shall hear it, or sing it, as the ungodly colleges of priests do, that daily boo and roar the holy Scriptures out of their mouths, and understand no more the meaning thereof, than the walls which they sing and speak unto. We must therefore do as King David did, lift up the eyes of our minds unto heaven, and fix our faith (as he saith) fast in the Lord (Psalm xxv.); and then shall we see the unspeakable treasures and wisdom, that lie hid in this marvellous and comfortable head and beginning of this Psalm, "The Lord feedeth me," &c.

Our Saviour Christ openeth plainly in St. John, what it is to be the sheep of God, and to be fed by him, and saith, "They will hear the Shepherd's voice, but no stranger's voice; and because they hear the Shepherd's voice, the Shepherd will give them everlasting life; and no man shall take them out of the Shepherd's hands." There is the greatest treasure and most necessary riches for the sheep of God uttered, which is not the knowledge of God alone to be preserved in this life, and to lack nothing that is expedient and necessary for the preservation thereof; but also to understand, which

ways the heavenly Father teacheth and leadeth us to the mansion and dwelling-place of life everlasting. And if man were wise, he might soon perceive how much the life to come is better than the life present; yea, be it never so favourably fed and preserved by the heavenly Father our Shepherd and Governor: for his tuition here of us, although it be sure, and so strong, that none can take us out of his hands; yet is our safeguard and life troubled and mingled with adversities, subject to persecution, and also unto death: but in the life to come, God's tuition is all joy, all mirth, all solace, with all perpetuity and endless felicity. And of this treasure David chiefly meant in the fore-front of the Psalm, when he said, "And I shall lack nothing;" for we see (until this life be taken from us) most troubles and most care begin and tarry in the house of God among his sheep, which be as lambs among wolves. (1 Pet. iv.) Wherefore, the voice and teaching of the Shepherd doth heal the minds of the sheep (Matt. x.), God's dear elect, and pulleth from them all unprofitable fear and carefulness: it quencheth all flames of lust and concupiscence: it maketh and giveth a man a noble and valiant mind, to contemn all worldly things: it bringeth a man in love with God's true honour, maketh him joyful in trouble, quiet in adversity, and sure that the end of God's people shall be glorious and joyful: and also that this favour of the Shepherd shall be his guide into the place of bliss; where be crowns of everlasting glory, for such as have been led by the Lord, and there they shall lack nothing: for there is neither eye can see, nor tongue can speak, nor mind can comprehend these joys and glory. And therefore the Prophet both constantly and cheerfully said, "The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing;" for all things of this

world be but trifles, in comparison of things to come.

Although it be a singular favour of God to understand his goodness and mercy towards us, in things belonging to this life, yet it is not to be compared to the other, as David wonderfully declareth in the 25th Psalm. When he hath numbered a great many of God's benefits, which he doth bestow upon his poor servants in this life, he in the end maketh mention of one specially, that passeth them all, in these words: "The Lord openeth to such as fear him his secrets and his testament. The Lord openeth to his faithful servant the mysteries and secrets of his pleasure, and the knowledge of his laws." And these treasures, the knowledge and right understanding of God's most holy word, he saith, were more sweet unto him; than honey or the honeycomb, and more he esteemed the virtue of it, than he did precious stones. Of all gifts this was the principal, that God gave unto him; a right and true knowledge of himself. Wherefore; it shall be most expedient and necessary for every Christian man to labour, study, and pray, that he may earnestly, and with a faithful heart, know himself to be no better than a silly poor sheep; that hath nothing of himself, nor of any other, to save his body and soul, but only the mercy of his Shepherd, the heavenly Father; and to be assured also, that his only mercy and goodness alone in Christ, and none other besides him, is able to feed him; so that he shall lack nothing necessary in this life, nor in the life to come.

| THE SECOND PART OF THE PSALM.

WHEREIN THE LIFE AND SALVATION OF MAN
CONSISTETH.

Ver. 2. *He shall feed me in pleasant pastures, and he shall lead me by the river side.*

He shall set me in the pastures most pleasant and rich of his doctrine, and in the contemplation of heavenly things, wherewithal the minds of godly men are nourished and fed with unspeakable joy; and near unto the plenteous floods of the Holy Ghost, and the sweet waters of the holy Scriptures, he will feed me: in the which places the sheep of the Lord are nourished unto eternal life, abounding with milk, and bringing forth most blessed fruit. The Scripture of God useth this word "feed" in many significations (John, xx. Acts, xx. Jeremiah, iii. Ezek. xxxiv. 2 Sam. lvii. Mic. v.): sometimes to teach and instruct, sometimes to rule and govern, as magistrates rule their people as well by law as by strength: sometimes to punish and correct, &c. But in this place the Prophet useth "feeding" as well for instruction by God's word, as also for defence and safeguard of God's people by God's most mighty power. He useth this word "pasture," for the word of God itself, as a thing which is the only food of a man's soul to live upon (John, x. Psalm lxxiv. lxxix. xcv. Jer. iii. Ezek. xxxiv. Joel, i. Matt. iv.), as the meat and drink is for the body. He useth this word "lead," for conducting, that the man which is led, at no time go out of the way, but always may know where he is, and whither he is going: as in many other of his Psalms he useth the same manner of speaking. The "rivers of refreshment" he useth, for the plentiful gifts of the Holy Ghost, wherewithal the faithful man is replenished. (Psalm lx. lxxiii. lxxvi.) His

saying therefore is as much as if he had spoken without allegory or translation thus: "He instructeth me with his word, and conducteth me with his Holy Spirit, that I cannot err or perish." (Rev. vii. Isaiah, iv. John, xlvii.)

In this part of the Psalm be many things worthy to be noted. First, it is declared, that the life of man consisteth in the food of God's word: then, that there is none that giveth the same to be eaten, but God our heavenly Shepherd: the next, that none can eat of this meat of God's word, but such as the Holy Ghost feedeth with the word. Our Saviour Christ declareth, that "man liveth not by bread alone, but of every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. iv.) Whereby he teacheth us, that as the body liveth by external meats, so doth the soul by the word of God.

And no more possible is it for a man to live in God without the word of God, that in the world without the meat of the world. And St. Peter confesseth the same: for when the Capernaïtes, and many of Christ's own disciples, had satisfied their bodies with external meats, they cared not for their souls, neither could they abide to be fed, nor to hear the meat of the soul spoken of, although Christ did dress it most wholesomely with many godly and sweet words; they would not tarry until Christ had made that meat ready for them, they could not be contented to feed their bellies with his meats, but their souls they would not commit to his diet, but departed as hungry as they came, through their own folly. Christ was leading them from the five barley-loaves and two fishes, wherewith they had filled their bellies, unto the pleasant pastures of the heavenly word, that shewed neither barley-loaves nor fish, but his own precious blood and painful passion, to be the meat of their souls: howbeit, they could not come into

this pasture, nor taste in any case of the sweet herbs and nourishment of their souls. When Christ perceived they would not be led into this pleasant pasture, he let them go whither they would, and to feed upon what pasture they would. And then he asked of his twelve that tarried, saying: "Will ye depart also?" Peter, as one that had fed both body and soul, as his fellows had, perceived that the body was but half the man, and that being fed, there was but half a man fed; and also that such meats as went into the mouth, satisfied no more than the body, that the mouth was made for: he felt moreover, that his soul was fed by Christ's doctrine, and that the hunger of sin, the ire of God, the accusation of the law, and the demand and claim of the devil, were quenched and taken away: he perceived likewise, that the meat which brought this nourishment, was the heavenly doctrine that Christ spake of, touching his death and passion: and he understood also, that this meat passed not into the body by the mouth, but into the soul by faith, and by the presence of God's Spirit with his spirit; that the body also should be partaker as well of the grace that was in it, as of the life: so that he felt himself not only to have a body and a soul alive, but also that they were graciously replenished with the pastures and food of God's favour. Wherefore he said unto Christ, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of everlasting life:" which words in effect sound no other thing that this Psalm doth, where David saith: "The Lord feedeth me, and I shall want nothing; for he leadeth me into his pleasant pastures, and pastureth me by the river's side." Wherein it appeareth manifestly, that the word of God is the life of the soul.

The Prophet David doth marvellously open this thing, in the repeating so many times the word of

God, in a Psalm worthy much reading, and more marking of the things contained therein: for he entreateth all the Psalm through, that a godly life doth consist in the observation of God's laws; and therefore doth he so many times, in the 119th Psalm, pray God to illuminate and endue his spirit and heart with these two virtues, knowledge and love of his word, wherewith he may both know how to serve God, and at all times to be acceptable unto him,, And our Saviour Christ himself, in St. Luke, saith unto a woman, "Blessed be they that hear the word of God, and keep it." (Chap. ii.) And in St. John, Christ exhorteth all men to the reading and exercising of the Scriptures. (Chap. v.) For the ignorance of God's word bringeth with it a murrain and rot of the soul; yet for the sins of the people God said, he would send a hunger and famine amongst them, not a hunger of bread nor water, but of hearing God's word. (Amos, viii.) King David therefore, as one assured both of the Author of life and also of the food wherewith the life is maintained, stayeth himself with God's benediction and favour, that he is assured God feedeth him with his word. And he sheweth also that none is the author of this word, neither can any give it, but God alone: for when the first fall of Adam and Eve, by eating forbidden meats, had poisoned and infected both body and soul with sin and God's displeasure, so that he was destitute both of God's favour and wisdom, none but God could tell him where remedy and help lay; nor yet could any deliver him the help but God: for till God made promise that the Seed of a woman should make whole and save that which the devil and man had made sick and lost, by reason of sin, and also made open the remedy unto Adam, and inclined his heart to believe the remedy, Adam was dead in sin, and utterly cast away: then the pity of the heavenly

Shepherd said, he should, notwithstanding, in time be brought into the same pasture again, and none should deceive him, nor bring him any more out of the pastures of life. (John, x.)

But only God gave this meat, which was his holy word and promise, and also the mouth of faith to eat these promises of God's only gifts. (Eph. ii.) And the same appeareth throughout the whole Bible, that only God, by sending of his word and preachers, brought knowledge of everlasting life to the people that were in ignorance. As St. Paul saith (Heb. i.), God beforetime spake unto our fathers by the Prophets, and in these latter days unto us, by his Son, and after the ascension of his Son, by his Apostles and Evangelists (Matt. xxviii.), insomuch that none of the Prophets ever spake of God's word, that maintained the life of the soul, otherwise than they received it of the high Shepherd, Almighty God, as St. Peter saith (2 Pet. i.): "Prophecy came not by the will of man, but the holy men of God spake as they were taught by the Holy Ghost:" so that God is the only author and fountain of his true word, the food of all men's souls. (James, i.) In like manner, he is the only giver of the same: as he is the giver of it, and none but himself; so none can eat it, but such as have the same delivered unto them by the Holy Ghost. So our Saviour Christ likewise, in the Gospel of St. John (chap. v.), telleth Nicodemus, that it was not possible to understand and to know the grace of redemption, except he were born from above. And when St. Paul preached the word of God at Philippi, amongst the women by the water-side, the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, to understand the things spoken of by Paul. (Acts, xvi.) And when Christ preached among the Jews, and wrought wonderful miracles, yet they understood nothing, neither were they any thing the better.

And Christ sheweth the cause: "Therefore ye hear not, because ye be not of God." (John, viii.) But the fault was not in God, but in the obstinacy and frowardness of their own hearts, as you may see in St. Matthew (chap. xxiii.).

Christ offered himself, but yet the nature of man rebelled at all times. St. Paul to the Corinthians wonderfully setteth forth man's unableness, and saith: "The natural man is not able to comprehend the things that be of God." (1 Cor. ii.) And in St. John Christ saith, "No man can come unto him except the heavenly Father draw him, for they must be all taught of God." (John, vi.) Now, as the Prophet saw these things for himself and his salvation in God's word, even so must every Christian man take heed that he learn the same doctrine, or else it were no commodity to have the Scripture of God delivered and taught unto us. And every reader and hearer must learn of this Psalm, that there is none other food or meat for the soul but God's word; and whoever do refuse it when it is offered or preached; or, when they know the truth thereof, do yet of malice, fear, lucre, and gain of the world, or any other way, repugn it, they be unworthy of all mercy and forgiveness. Let every man and woman therefore examine their own consciences without flattering of themselves, and they shall find that the most part of this realm of England, in the time of our holy and blessed King Edward the Sixth, were fed with this holy food of God's word, or else might have been fed with it; for it was offered and sent unto them, as well by most godly statutes and laws of Parliament, as by many noblemen and virtuous learned preachers. If they fed not upon it accordingly, or now their teeth stand on edge, and their stomachs be cloyed with it, to their peril be it. Thus Christ saith:

“ They have nothing whereby justly to excuse themselves of their sin.” (John, xv.) And likewise he saith, that whosoever hateth him, hateth also his Father; by which words it appeareth manifestly, that no man can hate Christ’s doctrine, but he must hate Christ himself; and no man can hate Christ, but he must also hate the Father of heaven. Wherefore, it is expedient for every man to mark such places; for it was not Christ’s name, nor Christ’s person, that the Jews hated so mortally Christ for, but they hated him to death for his doctrine sake; and it was Christ’s doctrine that condemned the world, and shewed the life and learning of the world to be evil, and could not abide the light of God’s word (John, iii.); and, therefore, in no case they could abide to hear of it, as ye see the like in his poor preachers. For his word’s sake they be less passed of than dogs or brute beasts, for they be hated to death; and more favour doth Barabbas, the murderer, find, than Peter, the preacher of Christ, that would lead the flock, redeemed with Christ’s precious blood, into the pastures of God’s word with the Prophet David. And yet, in this hatred of God’s word, the food of God’s sheep, they would be seen, and none but they, to love and honour God; but it is not so in their hearts: for they have a contempt of God, as their fruits well declare. And Christ saith, they hate both him and his Father, yea, and that without cause.

But thou, Christian reader, see thou feed thy soul with no other meat, than with the wholesome pastures of God’s word, whatsoever the world shall say or do. (Psalm xxxv.) Look upon this text of St. John (chap. xv.), “ When the Comforter shall come, whom I shall send from my Father, even the Spirit of truth, which doth proceed

from the Father, he shall testify and bear record of me." Weigh that place, and think wherefore the Son of Man referred himself to the witness of the Holy Ghost, and ye shall know that it was for no untruth that was in the author being Christ, or in the doctrine that he preached, but only to make the disciples to be of good comfort, and that they should not esteem the Gospel he preached unto them any thing the less, although it had many adversaries and enemies, and was spoken against in manner every where; for against the fury and false judgment of the world that contemned the Gospel, they should have the testimony of the Holy Ghost to allow and warrant the Gospel. Let us, therefore, pray to the heavenly Shepherd, that he will give us his holy Spirit, to testify for the word of God, the only food of our souls, that it is true that God saith, and only good that he appointed to feed us. And this we may be assured of, that in this heavy and sorrowful time there is nothing can testify for the truth of God's word, and keep us in the pleasant pasture thereof, but the very Spirit of God, which we must set against all the tumults and dangers of the world; for if we make this verity of God subject to the judgment of the world, our faith shall quail and faint every hour, as men's judgments vary. Wherefore, let us pray to have always in us the spirit of adoption, whereby, when our faith shall be assaulted, we may cry, "Father, Father!" and the same help for the maintenance of the truth God promised by his holy Prophet Isaiah (chap. lix.), saying, "This is my covenant with them (saith the Lord), My spirit which is in thee, and my words, which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart from thy mouth, nor from the mouth of thy seed, nor from the mouth of the

seed of thy seed, from henceforth until the world's end."

Here doth the Almighty God set forth what a treasure and singular gift his word is, and that it shall not depart from his people until the world's end. And in these words is this part of David's Psalm marvellously opened and set forth. "It is the Lord alone that feedeth and instructeth," saith Isaiah the Prophet; it was not man's own imagination and intention, nor the wisdom and religion of his fathers (whatsoever they were), but it was the Lord that spake, and made the covenant with man, and put his spirit in man to understand the covenant; and by his word, and none other word, he instructed man, and said, that by this means all men should, till the world's end, feed and eat of God's blessed promises. For in his word he hath expressed and opened to every man what he shall have, even the remission of sin, the acceptance into his fatherly favour, grace to live well in this life, and, at the end, to be received into the everlasting life.

Of these things the reader may know what maintaineth life, even the word of God, as Christ saith (Matt. iv.): "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what ye will, and ye shall have it." (Psalm xix. cxix. 2 Tim. iii. Heb. i. 1 Pet. i.).

He shall learn also, that it is not general council, nor provincial council, the determination and agreement of men, that can be the author of this food, but only God. (Gal. i.) And as God is the only author of this food; even so is his holy Spirit, he that feedeth the poor simple soul of the Christian man with his blessed pasture, and not the wisdom of man, men's sacrifices, or men's doings. (John, vi. xv. Isaiah, liv.) But as

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touching the food of man's soul, to be the only word of God, I will (if it be God's blessed pleasure, to whom, in the bitter and painful passion of Christ, I commit my will, with my life and death), open unto the sheep and lambs of God, at large in another book.

THE THIRD PART OF THE PSALM.

HOW MAN IS BROUGHT TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE AND SALVATION: WHICH PART SHEWETH WHAT MAN IS OF HIMSELF, AND HOW HE IS BROUGHT INTO THIS LIFE, AND TO FEED IN THE PLEASANT PASTURES OF GOD'S WORD.

Ver. 3. *He shall convert my soul, and bring me into the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.*

My soul erred and went astray from the right way of godly living, but the Lord converted me from mine errors and faults of living, and brought me to the observation of his holy laws, wherein is contained all justice, truth, and godliness.

Here is to be noted, what degrees and orders the Lord and heavenly Shepherd doth use, in bringing his sheep unto the pasture of life. First, he converteth the man that is gone astray, by his wicked ways and sinful manner of living. If he were an infidel, he bringeth him, first, to know, feel, and hate his infidelity, and, afterwards, to a true faith. If he be a persecutor, he sheweth him, first, his tyranny, and, afterwards, how to use himself meekly. If he be a sinful man, that liveth contrary to his knowledge and profession, he bringeth him, first, to the knowledge and hatred of his sin, and, afterwards, to the forgiveness of the same. As Christ our Saviour wonderfully teacheth in St. John,

where he saith: "The Holy Ghost, when he cometh, shall rebuke the world of sin, justice, and judgment." (Chap. xvi.) By the which words he declareth, that the faithful of God cannot profit in the Gospel of Christ, neither love nor exercise justice and virtue, except they be taught, and made to feel, the burden and danger of sin, and be brought to humble themselves, as men that be of themselves nothing but sin. And, therefore, the law and threatenings of God be very wholesome, whose nature and property is to cite and call men's conscience unto the judgment of God, and to wound the spirit of man with terror and fear. Wherefore Christ useth a wonderful way, and teacheth the same unto his Apostles, that neither himself for that present time, nor they in time to come, could preach profitably the Gospel, wherewith men are led into the sweet and pleasant field of God's promises by his word, except they use this order, to lead them from sin to justice, and from death to life. And as justice and life come by Christ, shewed unto us in his bitter passion, death, and glorious resurrection; so do sin and death both appear, and be felt by the spirit of God, shewed unto us in the law.

This order also saw the holy Prophet, when he saith: "The Lord converteth my soul, and leadeth me into the paths of righteousness." This is a wonderful sentence, and much and deeply to be considered and weighed of the Christian man. "The Lord converteth my soul," saith David. He feeleth in himself, that as long as the devil and sin have the rule and kingdom in man, the soul of man, being God's creature, is deformed, foul, horrible, and so troubled, that it is like unto all things, more than unto God and virtue, whereunto it was created: but when the wicked devil and deformed sin be, by

the victory of Christ, overcome and expelled, the soul waxeth fair, amiable, sweet, loving, pleasant, and like unto God again, and cometh into order and obeisance unto its Creator ; and so, brought into the paths of righteousness, feedeth with the rest of God's well-ordered flock upon the pastures and food of his holy word, to do his blessed will.

Oh ! that we would, in the glass of God's word, look upon our own souls, when they be in the tyranny of the devil, under the kingdom of sin, as this king did : we should more loath and detest our own soul, and the company that our soul is accompanied withal, than if we should, for all our lifetime, be put into sties with hogs, and always be bound, during our life, to live with them, feed as they feed, sleep and wake as they do, and be as they be in all things. Look in the Gospel of St. Luke (chap. xv.), and there shall ye see a man, by sin so foul, so disordered, so accompanied with swine, so hunger-baned, so rent and torn, so beggarly, so wretched, so vile, so loathsome, and so stinking, that the very swine were better for their condition than he was. But see how the heavenly Shepherd beheld from his heavenly throne, the place of the everlasting joys, this poor strayed sheep, feeding, not among sheep, but among swine, and yet could not be satisfied therewith. And no marvel : for swine feed not upon the meat of sheep, nor yet do sheep fill themselves with hog's draff and swilling ; but this Shepherd used his old wonted clemency, and strake the heart of his sheep, making him to weep and bewail his condition—a man to come to such dishonour, to be coupled and matched with swine, to feed like swine, eat like swine such meat as swine eat, remembering that the worst in his father's house was a prince and noble king, in comparison and respect of him. Then also being persuaded of

his father's mercy, he returned, and his father brought him into his pleasant and sweet pastures, and gave him his old favour and accustomed apparel again, as a man to keep company with men, and no more with adulterous men and unclean swine; howbeit, he came not to his old honour again, till the Lord had practised in him that he practised in this Prophet, King David: "He converted and turned my soul."

It is but a folly for a man to flatter himself, as though he were a Christian man, when his heart and soul is not turned unto the Lord; he shall never feed in the pastures of life, but be an hypocrite all the days of his life, as the most part of the world be that profess Christ's name at this present day. They say, they be converted from the world to God, when there is nothing within the pastures of God's word but that they will contemn, rather than to have as much as an evil look of the world for it. They say they be converted to God, when they be contented with the world to honour that for God, that is but bread and wine in the matter and substance, as the Scripture of God, and the holy church of Christ, have taught and believed these thousand and five hundred years and more. O Lord! be these men turned to thee? Be these the men that shall dwell with thee in thy holy mount of Sion, and stand in thy holy place? (Psalm xxiv.) Nay, doubtless; for they be not turned to thee, but from thee; and be not with thee, but against thee. They speak with thee, and yet their deeds dishonour thee; they talk of truth, and practise lies. What, good Lord! shall thy simple and poor unlearned sheep do? Where shall they seek thy truth? for the shepherds say and sing this Psalm every week, and at every dirge for the dead; and yet they be not converted in their spirits

to thee, that thou mightest lead them into the paths of righteousness. But, Lord! there is no man now (in manner) that dare accuse them: they destroy themselves and thy sheep, and no man can be suffered with God's word to remedy it. Notwithstanding, good Lord! although, in this world, none may accuse them, yet they, in the world to come, shall have King David (whose Psalms they daily read, and in whom they most glory) to accuse them, both of heresy and blasphemy, as Moses shall accuse the wicked Jews, whom they most glory of. For as the Jews read the Scripture of Moses, and yet were never the better: so these priests of antichrist read the holy Scripture, and yet neither the people, nor they themselves, are any thing the better. And in this they pass the abomination of the Jews and Turks: for they were, and yet be, content, that their books of religion shall be used in their churches in the vulgar and common tongue: but these enemies of God and man would not have the word that God hath appointed for all men's salvation, to be used in any tongue but in the Latin.

The God, therefore, of peace, that brought again from death to life the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting testament, our Lord Jesus Christ, convert the souls and hearts of all those that cause the sheep of God thus to eat and feed upon the carrion and infected pastures of men's traditions! Amen.

Now, as King David in this text hath wonderfully set forth the miserable nature of all God's sheep, and put himself for an example, that the nature and condition of all men is corrupt, wicked, and damnable, so that it cannot be partaker of God's benediction and everlasting grace, except it be born anew, amended, restored, and instructed; so likewise he sheweth, that none converteth the soul of man,

but the heavenly Father, the great Shepherd, that both seeth the lost state of his sheep, and willet of his mercy the salvation and calling of the sheep home again : and then he proceedeth farther, and sheweth what the heavenly Shepherd will do with his sheep. He saith he will lead them into the paths of justice. Wherein the Prophet declareth, that it is not only God that converteth the man from evil, but also he alone that keepeth him in goodness and virtue. And therein is shewed a wonderful misery and wretchedness in the soul and body of man, that can neither begin nor yet continue in a life acceptable unto God, except that God wholly worketh the same himself.

And as it declareth the wonderful wretchedness of man, so doth it manifest and set forth a wonderful and unspeakable mercy and compassion of God towards man, that so marvellously and graciously he can be content to help and save his enemy and very adversary. But herein is required of as many as the Lord converteth from iniquity and sinful living, that they walk in the same law, and use their conversation in equity and justice, as it becometh obedient men and women redeemed with the Shepherd's most precious blood. For the Lord doth not teach his sheep the truth, that they should live in falsehood ; neither giveth he them the remission of their sins, that they should return to the same again : but because they should studiously apply and diligently exercise themselves in virtuous works, to the honour of Almighty God. (Psalm i. Matt. v.)

There be two sorts of people that the Lord will judge and punish in the latter day, with extreme ire and justice. The one sort be called upon to learn the knowledge of God, and of God's honour, as God's word commandeth : but they will not hear, nor obey the calling, but know God, and learn God,

as the custom and manner of the world is to know him and learn him, though it be never so far from the truth; and the other sort be contented to hear and learn to know God, and to serve him as he teacheth in his holy and most pure word, but in their hearts consent not to their knowledge; but, contrary to it, they do outward service to a false god, and frame their conversation, both in religion towards God, and their manners towards men, as men of the world do. So that God hath no more reverence of him that knoweth the truth, than of him that is ignorant of the truth.

Isaiah the Prophet speaketh against the first sort of men, that will not hear when they be called, nor learn when they be taught, and saith: "When other men shall laugh, they shall weep; when others be merry, they shall be sorry; when others be whole, they shall be sick; when other men shall live, they shall die; and when other men rejoice in mirth, they shall lament in sorrow." (Chap. lxxv.) And good cause why, saith St. Paul: "for the Lord hath stretched forth his hand always to a rebellious and obstinate people, that will not learn nor know his holy will." (Romans, x.) Again, the other sort that know and have learned the Lord's will and pleasure, and yet prepare not themselves to do his will, "shall be beaten with many stripes," saith our Saviour Christ. (Luke, xii.) And the Lord, in St. Matthew, doth wonderfully charge both such as ignorantly do offend, and those that do with knowledge offend, those also that be called upon to amendment in faith and charity, and those that be not called upon by preaching of the truth, and saith: "The greater damnation is upon such as know, or might know, or else when they do know, they be nothing the better for their knowledge." He putteth forth their four cities, Chorazin and

Bethsaida, Tyre and Sidon: two of them many times admonished by Christ to amend, the other two not so called upon; nevertheless, both of them the Lord will judge, but most severely such as neglect the word of God when it is offered. Therefore, it is not enough for a man to hearken or hear, read or learn God's word, but he must be ruled by God's word, frame his whole life after God's word, and, before all things, avoid idolatry by God's word: as King David saith in this Psalm, that the Lord did not only convert his soul, but brought him into the paths of justice.

Let every man and woman therefore think with themselves, what knowledge they have received of God; for he that hath received most shall make account for most; and the more he knoweth and abuseth his knowledge, the more shall be his damnation: and, in case they know nothing at all, and be never the better for all the preaching of the Lord's word, let them take heed what persons they be, and in what place they have dwelled. In case their poverty was such that they could not hear, and their dwelling where was no preaching at all; yet be they under the judgment and damnation of God, because they know not, as Tyre and Sidon were. If they were of such state, as they might have come if they would, and had preachers to tell them the truth, in case they would have heard the truth; such men and women shall be the more in danger of God's severe and just judgment. For God doth not only take an account of that which men have received, if they use not God's gifts well, but also straitly requireth of them, that might have learned the thing, that either willingly or obstinately they refused to learn: as ye may see by Chorazin and Bethsaida. God will as well take an account of him that refused to receive the gifts of

God's word, as he requireth an account of him that hath received it, and abused it. Whereby we learn, that not only the man that abuseth God's word shall be damned, but also he that will not learn God's word. (Matt. xi. Luke, xii.) King David had the word offered; he received it, and was carried thereby into the paths of justice, and lived godly thereafter. Now he goeth forth, and sheweth wherefore man is brought to life and salvation.

THE FOURTH PART OF THE PSALM.

WHEREFORE MAN IS BROUGHT T LIFE AND
SALVATION.

Ver. 3 continued.—*For his name's sake.*

He brought not me to life and salvation (saith the Prophet) for any merits or deservings of mine, but for his own infinite goodness sake; and whatsoever evil hath been done, and sin committed, all these things I ascribe to my corrupt nature, and accuse myself to be the doer of them: but if any thing have been thought, said, or done, that is virtuous and godly, that I wholly ascribe and attribute unto the mercy of God, that gave me a good mind to wish to do well, and also strength to do the things that he gave me will to wish.

Of this part of the Psalm we learn, that man can neither wish nor speak, nor do any thing, nor yet understand any thing that good is, but only through the mercy of God, who maketh of an ignorant man a man of knowledge, of an unwilling man a willing man, of an evil speaker a good speaker, and of an evil doer a good doer. Therefore St. Paul, when he seeth that the nature of man will take upon her to be the author of any good thing, he accuseth and condemneth her of arrogance and pride, saying, "What hast thou that thou hast not received? If

thou hast received, why dost thou glory as though thou receivedst not?" (1 Cor. iv.) And in the same Epistle he saith, that he "preached Christ crucified, which was a slander to the Jews, and a foolishness to the Gentiles" (1 Cor. i.); "yet (saith he) the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." And that had King David good experience of, when he said, "The Lord ruleth me, and I lack nothing; he putteth me in a sweet pasture, and leadeth me by the river's side; he turneth my soul, and conducteth me into the way and path of justice, for his name's sake, and for his mercy's sake." He saw the devil, the world, his flesh, and sin, all conquered by the power of God, and for his name's sake brought both to live, and also virtuously to live, to his honour that gave the life, and to his own salvation that received the life.

All our teaching a great many of years, and also your whole labours, have been chiefly to know the misery of man, and the mercy of Almighty God. Wherefore, it shall not need long to tarry in opening of this place of the Psalm; for ye be rich in God in these two points; God give you grace well to use them. Yet in any case we must remember, that our souls be turned from sin, and we be accepted as the people of everlasting life, only for God's mercy's sake. So doth King David wonderfully open unto us in the 32d Psalm, where he saith, "Blessed be they whose sins are forgiven, and whose transgressions be covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin." Of the which words we learn, that the godly King called those happy and blessed, not that be clean and pure without sin (for there is no such man in this life); but those be blessed, whose sins the mercy of God forgiveth: and they be only such, as unfeignedly acknowledge their

sin, and steadfastly from their hearts believe, that the death and passion of Jesus Christ is the only expiation and purging thereof: as St. Paul wonderfully expoundeth David's words in his Epistle to the Romans (chap. iv.).

As the Prophet by these words, "For his name's sake," declareth, that there is nothing in him, nor in any other man, wherefore God should turn the soul of man from death to life, from error to truth, from the hatred of God to God's love, from wandering astray to a stablished continuance in the verity of God's words, but only God's mercy; so doth he in other of his Psalms always, when he intreateth of God's mercy and of man's sin, set forth man so naked and vile, as a thing most destitute of all health and salvation, and sheweth that none of these gifts, remission of sin, acceptation unto God's love and favour, pasturing of them with his most blessed word, can happen unto any other, saving unto such as do know, and earnestly confess, that they be sinners, and infected with many contagious and dangerous infirmities. And therefore he saith in the second verse of the Psalm above mentioned (xxxii.), "Blessed is he to whom the Lord imputeth no sin, and in whose spirit there is no guile." For there is no greater guile, nor more danger in man, than to think himself to be somewhat, when he is nothing in deed; or else to think himself to be of such purity of mind, as though he needed not this free remission and favour of God. And as there is nothing more proud and arrogant than such a mind; so there is nothing in man more detestable and miserable.

Of the contrary part, they be blessed that hunger and thirst for justice; for, "God filleth the hungry with good things, but the proud he sendeth away empty." (Matt. v. Luke, i.) And that knew this holy Prophet right well, that it was humility, and the

casting down of himself, that was most acceptable unto God, and the seeking of health and salvation, only for his name's sake, that is to say, for his mercy promised in the death and passion of his only Son our Saviour Christ.

In the end of the 32d Psalm, King David, that had thus humbled himself, bringeth in God that speaketh unto him, while he is thus making his complaint of his corrupt nature and sinful life, saying in this manner, "I will give thee understanding, and instruct thee in the way thou shalt go, and will have mine eyes ever upon thee." Wherein he declareth, that such humbled men and lowly persons, as know their iniquity, shall have understanding of God, and shall not swerve from the right ways, not for their deeds and their deservings, but for his mercy that vouchsafeth to instruct and teach them.

And so likewise doth this godly King shew in this Psalm, "The Lord ruleth me, and I lack nothing; he feedeth me in sweet pastures, and leadeth me by the river's side; he turneth my soul, and bringeth me into the paths of righteousness; and all for his name's sake." When he hath opened the salvation of man, and also the cause thereof, and wherein it consisteth, he proceedeth to the fifth part of his oration and holy hymn.

THE FIFTH PART OF THE PSALM.

WHAT TROUBLE MAY HAPPEN TO SUCH AS GOD
GIVETH LIFE AND SALVATION UNTO.

Ver. 4. *Although I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me.*

Seeing I have such a guide and defender, there is no difficulty of peril, nor fear of death, that I will pass of. For what harm can death do to him that hath God the author of all life with him? Or what

can the tyranny of man do, where God is the defender?

In this fifth part King David sheweth how the Lord God doth exercise his sheep, whom he feedeth with his blessed word, in dangers and troubles; and also how he will defend them in the midst of their troubles, whatsoever they be. In the first words of the fifth part of this sacred and holy hymn, the Prophet declareth, that the life of God's sheep and people in this world cannot be without dangers and troubles. Therefore Christ saith, that he came to put fire in the world, and that the same fire should burn; meaning, that he came to preach such a doctrine, as should move dissension and discord between friend and friend, the father and the son, and set them at debate. Not that his word is a learning or doctrine of dissension and discord of itself, but that by the malice of men, that cannot abide to be rebuked by the word of God, they will be always at discord and variance with the word of God, and with any friend or foe that teacheth it. (Luke, xii.) And the same doth Christ our heavenly Shepherd shew us, both in his doctrine and in his life, who was hated and troubled more than any man before or since his time, and assureth all his to have troubles in this world, yea and death also. But it forceth not; for he saith, "I have overcome the world." (John, vii. viii. ix. x. xvi.) And whatsoever the dangers be, and how horrible soever they seem, Christ being with us, we need not to fear. (John, xvi.) Therefore in this point the Prophet correcteth the foolish opinion of man, that would live as one of the sheep of God in this world without troubles. It is contrary both to the person that professeth God, and also to the religion that he is professed unto; for in the world both shall be (as Christ saith) hated: of which hatred come persecution and troubles, so that the

people of God shall, whether they will or will not, pass through many dangers, and no less perilous than the shadows and very image of death, as here King David sheweth in this wholesome and blessed hymn.

And as he seeth right well, that the state and condition of God's people and sheep, is to be troubled for Christ and his word : even so did Zechariah the Prophet speak of Christ and his people (Zech. ii.), how that not only the sheep should be troubled and scattered abroad (Matt. xxvi.), but also the shepherd should be stricken with the sword, that both sheep and shepherd should be condemned in this world. But now, as David and Zechariah declare, that the life and condition of Christ and his sheep be troublous in the world : so do they both declare, that whatsoever the troubles be, they be both known and appointed upon whom they shall fall, and in what time they shall trouble the sheep of God : so that they can come no sooner than God appointeth, nor do any more harm than the heavenly Shepherd shall appoint them to do. And this we may see and learn as well in Christ as in his sheep.

How many times did the Priests and Pharisees conspire Christ's death ? Yet because his time was not come, they had not their purpose : but when the time of God was come, Christ said to his sheep : " Ye shall be all troubled this night for my cause ; for the Shepherd shall be stricken, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad." (John, xviii.) Then, as God had appointed the time, it could be no longer deferred. And because they should not miss of him, whose death they sought, he came and met them, and offered himself unto them, and said, that he was the same man, Jesus of Nazareth, whom they sought. And when they had taken him, and had used as much cruelty towards him, as their wicked malice and devilish hatred could devise, they killed him, and made him

to pass not only the shadow and image of death, but also death itself. They thought then they had him where they would, and said, "He hath saved others; let him now save himself, if he can." (Matt. xxvii. Mark, xv. Luke, xxiii. John, xix.)

When he was laid in the grave with his fathers, they thought to execute their plagues and tyranny towards him being dead, purposing, that, as they had brought him to death and killed him, so likewise they would keep him down still, that he should never see life again, but rot in the earth like a wretch, until worms had eaten him. And for the performance of this purpose, to do all their whole wills to the uttermost, they came to Pilate, and said, that the deceiver of the people that lay in the grave, made his boast while he was alive, that the third day after his death he would rise again; but if it should be so, it would be worse with them after, than it was before. "Appoint therefore soldiers (said they), and watchmen to keep the sepulchre till the third day be past." (Matt. xxvii.) Whilst they yet minded to lay as much evil and contempt upon Christ our Shepherd, as they meant unto him, came the heavenly Father, that suffereth no more ignominy to fall upon his, nor will suffer them to continue any longer than him pleaseth, with this inhibition and stay of further proceedings in dishonouring and persecuting his only Son, and said: "*Jam rediit lux tertia, surge, sepulte meus:*" that is as much as to say, "Now is come the third day; arise, mine own dear Son buried." And then was the sorrow and contempt of this our persecuted Shepherd not only ended, but also turned into endless and unspeakable joys: he passed with his forefather David most bitter pains, and also most vile death; but he feared not, because God was with him. The same appointment also hath the heavenly Father made

with all dangers and troubles that shall happen unto us his poor and afflicted sheep, taken daily (as it were to the shambles) to suffer what God's enemies can devise. But the heavenly Shepherd doth see all their doings out of heaven, and mocketh them to scorn (Psalm ii.): for they shall never do as much as they would, against Christ and his people, but as much as God will suffer them. David afterwards, in his 37th Psalm, teacheth us the same with marvellous words and divine sentences: "Lay (saith he) thy care upon the Lord, and trust in him, and he shall help thee."

It is most necessary therefore for every troubled man to know in his mind, and feel in his heart, that there are no troubles that happen unto man, whatsoever they be, come they by chance or fortune, as many men say and think, but that they come by the providence of God: yea, the very winds of the air, tempests in the clouds, trembling of the earth, rages in the sea, or any other that come, how sudden or how unlooked-for soever they appear: as ye may read in the 29th Psalm of this Prophet, wherein be wonderful tempests and troublesome things spoken of, as well done in the waters, as upon the dry land.

But here, alas! is our nature and knowledge much to be lamented and complained upon: for as the knowledge we have of God's favour and gentleness towards us in Christ (for the most part) consisteth in the understanding of the mind and talk with the mouth, but the virtue, strength, and operation of the same favour of God is not sealed in our hearts and consciences: even so be the troubles and adversities, which God threateneth for sin, spoken and talked of with the tongue, and known in the mind, but they be not earnestly nor feelingly sealed in our conscience and heart. And of this cometh it, that

neither love God, nor rejoice in his promises as ought to do, when we hear or read them ; neither hate sin, nor be sorrowful for God's displeasure, sin and God's displeasure should be sorrowed and mourned for of Christian men. Hereof also cometh, dearly beloved, that we love no further than knowledge and tongue, nor hate vice but in knowledge and tongue. But, alas ! how miserable is this state and condition, that knoweth neither life nor death, virtue nor vice, truth nor falsehood, God nor the devil, heaven nor hell, but half as much as they ought of Christian men to be known. Read on therefore, and mark, the 37th Psalm, and you shall know, that it is not enough for Christian men to understand and speak of virtue and vice, but that the virtue must be sealed in the conscience, and loved, and the vice kept out of the conscience, and hated ; as David saith, " Leave doing of evil, and do good : " so likewise he speaketh of a feeling Christian man, whose conscience hath tasted how sweet and amiable God is : " Taste and feel (saith the prophet) how sweet the Lord is."

And this assure yourselves, that when ye feel your sins, and bewail the danger and damnation of them, the Spirit of God hath wrought that feeling, and that troubled and broken heart God will not despise. (Psalm li.) And there is no doubt or mistrust of a sensible and feeling sinner : but in case he can find in himself no love to the obedience of God, nor desire to do his will by hearing of his word, nor any feeling of sin, nor desire to be rid from it by hearing the law ; he hath knowledge in the mind and speech in the mouth, but no consent and feeling in his heart and conscience. And this knowledge liveth with him, and speaketh with virtue : whereas the heart and conscience consenteth to good, and abhorreth evil, if the virtue and nature of God's word by God's

Spirit be sealed in the conscience. And this doth St. Paul teach wonderfully, as well by faith, that cometh by hearing of God's word, as also of his precious supper, the sacrament of his body and blood and passion. He saith, that the heart believeth to righteousness (Rom. x.); that is to say, the conscience and heart of him that is sealed, and assured of the virtue and grace of God's promises in Christ, believeth to righteousness, or is ascertained and knoweth itself to be righteous and just before God, because it hath consented and received the mercy of God offered in the Gospel through the merits of Christ: and then the same faith, which God hath sealed in the heart, breaketh forth by confession, which confession is a very fruit of faith to salvation, as it is written by St. Paul in the same place.

And where this faith is so kindled in the heart, there can be none other but such a fruit following it; and as possible it is to have fire without heat or flame, as this virtue faith, without the fruit of well doing. And that is it that St. Paul saith to the Corinthians: "As often as ye eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, shew ye the Lord's death until he come." Wherein St. Paul requireth a knowledge of Christ in the receiver, not only in his mind that he knew Christ died for his sin, and the sin of the world, and to speak and declare the same death with his tongue unto others: but this is the chiefest and most principal commodity of Christ's holy supper (which men now ungodly call the mass), that the virtue and benefit of Christ's death, as it is appointed for the remission of his sins, be sealed and fully consented unto in his conscience. (1 Cor. ii.) And this knowledge of Christ's death, with the assurance of the virtue, strength, and power thereof in the heart, will and ought to inflame us to thanksgiving, and to preach and teach unto others those commodities

of Christ's death; that we know and feel first in ourselves within our own spirit and heart.

Thus I have tarried longer than I thought in this matter, because I would bring myself and all others (as much as lieth in me) to feel that knowledge and talk of virtue and vice, of God's favour and of God's punishment, is not sufficient; and to bring myself and all men from knowledge and talk to feeling, consenting, and a full surrendering of ourselves unto the profit and advantage of the things which we speak and know; or else knowledge and speaking please not God, nor profit ourselves, as Christ saith: "Not every man that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. vii.) Therefore did David both know, speak, and feel signed in his heart, the favour, help, and assistance of God, to be with him, into what troubles soever he should fall, and in that feeling did say he would not fear. But it may fortune I have so written of virtue and vice to be known of in the mind, spoke of with the mouth, and felt in the heart, that ye may judge and feel in yourselves, never to have come to this perfection. For this is out of doubt, he that hath God's love and fear thus sealed in his heart, liveth in this life rather an angelical life, than the life of a mortal man: and yet it is evident by King David in this Psalm, and by his 121st Psalm, and in many more, that he was so sure, and so well ascertained of God's present help in his troubles, that he cared nothing for death, or any other adversities that could happen. And doubtless, we perceive by his Psalms in many places, that his faith was as strong as steel, and he trembled not, nor doubted any thing, but was in manner without all kind of mistrust, and nothing troubled, whatsoever he saw contrary to God's promises; and he passed over them, as things that could not once withdraw his cogitations from the truth and

verity of God's promises, which he believed. As Abraham likewise did, he staggered not, but with constancy of faith would have killed his own son, so strong was his faith. (Gen. xxii.)

But as the gift of faith is a treasure incomparable, thus to know and feel faith to overcome all dangers; so maketh it the heart of him that is sealed with such a faith to feel the joys and mirth unspeakable. But as this faith is the gift of God, and cometh only from him; so is it in him only to appoint the time when it shall come, and how much and how strongly is shall be given at all times, which is not at all times like, but sometimes so strong, that nothing can make the faithful man afraid, no, not death itself; and sometimes it is so strong, that it maketh the man afflicted, to be contented to suffer, yea, death itself, rather than to offend God. But yet it is with much conflict, great troubles, many heavy and marvellous cogitations, and sometime with such a fear, as the man hath much ado to see and feel, in the latter end of his heavy conflict, the victory and upper hand of the temptation. And at another time the Christian man shall find such heaviness, oppression of sin, and troubles, that he shall not feel as much (in manner) as one spark of faith to comfort himself in the trouble of his mind (as he thinketh); but that all the floods and dreadful assaults of desperation have their course through his conscience. Nothing feel-eth he, but his own mind and poor conscience, one so to eat the other, that the conflict is more pain to him than death itself. He understandeth that God is able to do all things; he confesseth with the knowledge of his mind, and with his tongue in his head, that God is true and merciful; he would have his conscience and heart to agree thereunto, and be quiet: but the conscience is pricked and oppressed with so much fear and doubtfulness of God's ire for

sin, that he thinketh God can be merciful unto others, but not unto him. And thus doth his knowledge, for the time of temptation, rather trouble him than ease him, because his heart doth not, or rather cannot consent unto the knowledge; yet would he rather than his life, he could consent unto God, love God, hate sin, and be God's altogether, although he suffered for it all the pains of the world.

I have known in many good men and many good women, this trouble and heaviness of the spirit for the time, as though God had clean hid himself from the afflicted person, and had clean forsaken him: yet at length, the day of light from above and the comfort of the holy Spirit hath appeared, that lay covered under the veil and covert of bitter cogitations of God's just judgments against sin. Therefore, seeing that faith at all times hath not like strength in man, I do not speak to discomfort such as at all times find not their faith as strong as David did in this Psalm: for I know in the holy saints themselves it was not always like, but even in them as in others. And although we cannot compare with them in all things in the perfection of their faith, yet may they compare themselves with us in the weakness of our faith, as ye may see by the Scriptures.

In this Psalm and in many other ye shall perceive, that David, by the constancy and surety he felt in the promises of God, was so strong, so joyful, and comfortable in the midst of all dangers and troubles of death, that he did not only condemn troubles and death, but also desired death, and to be dissolved out of this world, as St. Paul and others did. At another time ye shall perceive him to be strong in faith, but not so joyful, nor yet the troubles so easy unto him, but that he suffered great battle and conflict with his troubles, and of the cause of all troubles, sin and transgression of God's laws, as ye may see

in the sixth Psalm ; where he cried out, " Lord, chasten me not in thy fury, nor punish me in thy wrath : my soul is sore troubled ; but how long, Lord, wilt thou defer help ?" And of such troubled consciences with conflicts ye shall find oftentimes in the book of Psalms, and in the rest of God's Scriptures, yet shall ye find the end of the temptation to be joyful and comfortable to the weak man that was so sore troubled : for although God suffer a long fight between his poor soldier and the devil ; yet he giveth the victory to his servant, as ye may see in King David. When he cried out, that both his body and soul were wearied with the cross of God's punishment, yet he said at the last, " Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity : for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping." (Psalm vi.) And in other of his Psalms ye shall perceive his faith more weak, and his soul troubled with such anguish and sorrow, that it shall seem there is no consolation in his soul, nor any show of God's carefulness towards him. In this state ye may see him in the 13th Psalm, where, as a man in a manner destitute of all consolation, he maketh his complaint, saying, " How long wilt thou forget me ?" The same may be read also in the 43d Psalm, where he sheweth that he, his most just cause, and the doctrine that he professed, were like altogether to have been overcome, so that his spirit was in manner all comfortless. Then he said to his own soul, " Why art thou so heavy, my soul ; and why dost thou trouble me ? Trust in the Lord," &c. (Psalm xlii. xliii.) And in the 42d Psalm he setteth forth wonderfully the bitter fight and sorrowful conflict between hope and desperation ; wherein he complaineth also of his own soul that was so much discomfited, and biddeth it trust in the Lord : of the which two places ye may learn, that no man had ever faith at all times like, but some

times more strong, sometimes more weak, as it pleased God to give it. Let no man therefore despair, although he find weakness of faith: for it shall make him to humble himself the more, and to be the more diligent to pray to have help, when he perceiveth his own weakness: and doubtless, at length the weak man by the strong God shall be brought to this point, that he shall in all troubles and adversities say with the Prophet, "If I should go through the shadow and dangers of death, I would not fear what troubles soever happen." And he sheweth his good assurance in the text that followeth, which is the sixth part of this holy and blessed hymn.

THE SIXTH PART OF THE PSALM.

WHEREBY THE TROUBLES OF GOD'S ELECT BE
OVERCOME.

The fourth Verse continued, and the fifth Verse:
expounded.

*For thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table before me, against them
that trouble me. Thou hast anointed my head with
oil, and my cup shall be full.*

Seeing thou art with me, at whose power and will all troubles go and come, I doubt not but to have the victory and overhand of them, how many and dangerous soever they be; for thy rod chasteneth me when I go astray, and thy staff stayeth me when I should fall:—two things most necessary for me, good Lord: the one to call me from my fault and error, and the other to keep me in thy truth and verity. What can be more blessed, than to be sustained and kept from falling by the staff and strength of the Most Highest? And what can

be more profitable, than to be beaten with his merciful rod, when we go astray? For he chasteneth as many as he loveth, and beateth as many as he receiveth into his holy profession. Notwithstanding, whilst we be here in this life, he feedeth us with the sweet pastures of wholesome herbs of his holy word, until we come to eternal life; and when we put off these bodies, and come into heaven, and know the blessed fruition and riches of his kingdom, then shall we not only be his sheep, but also the guests of his everlasting banquet; the which, Lord, thou settest before all them that love thee in this world, and dost so anoint and make glad our minds with thine Holy Spirit, that no adversities nor troubles can make us sorry.

In this sixth part the Prophet declareth the old saying amongst wise men,

Non minor est virtus quam quærere parva tueri;

that is to say, It is no less mastery to keep the thing that is won, than it was to win it. King David perceiveth right well the same; and therefore, as before in the Psalm he said, the Lord turned his soul, and led him into the pleasant pastures, where virtue and justice reigned, for his name's sake, and not for any righteousness of his own: so saith he now, that being brought into the pastures of truth and into the favour of the Almighty, and accounted and taken for one of his sheep, it is only God that keepeth and maintaineth him in the same state, condition, and grace. For he could not pass through the troubles and shadow of death (as he and all God's elect people must do), but only by the assistance of God; and therefore he saith, he passeth through all peril because he was with him.

Of this part of the Psalm we learn, that all the strength of man is unable to resist the troubles and

persecutions of God's people, and that the grace and presence of God is able to defend his people, and nothing but it. Therefore doth St. Paul bid the Ephesians be strong through the Lord, and through the might of his strength; for he saith, that great and many be our adversaries, strong and mighty, which go about not only to weaken us, but also to overcome us; and we of ourselves have no power to withstand. (Eph. vi.) Wherefore he willeth us to depend and stay only upon God's strength. And St. Peter also, when he hath declared the force and malice of the devil, he willeth us to resist him strongly in faith. (1 Pet. v.) And St. John saith, that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John, v.) And our Saviour Christ, when the time was come that he should depart out of the world corporally, and perceived how maliciously and strongly the devil and the world were bent against his disciples that he should leave in the world as sheep amongst wolves, and how little strength his poor flock had against such marvellous troubles; he made his most holy and effectual prayer for them present, and them in trouble, and likewise for us that be now, and also in trouble, in this sort: "Holy Father, keep them for thy name's sake, whom thou hast given me." (Matt. x.)

Here hath every one of God's people such learning, as teacheth that our help is only in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth (Psalm cxx.): and in this learning we shall understand two necessary lessons: the first, that none can defend us, but God alone, who is our protector, and none but he. And by this learning, he will beware to ask or seek help any other where, saving of God, as we be instructed by his holy word. And herein we honour him, to know and confess that there is none that can preserve or save us but he alone. The other lesson

is, that our conscience, understanding that God can and will help us, shall cause us in all trouble to commend ourselves unto him, and so more strongly and patiently bear and suffer all troubles and adversities, being assured that we shall overcome them through him, or else be taken by them from this world, into a world wherein is no trouble at all. So said this holy Prophet and King David: "If I walk in the shadow of death, I will not fear, for thou art with me." Now in that he saith, "he will not fear," he meaneth not that a man may see and suffer these perils without all perils (for then were a man rather a perfect spirit, than a mortal creature); but he meaneth that fear shall not overcome him; for Christ himself feared death (Matt. xxvi.): neither is there any man that shall suffer imprisonment for Christ's sake, but that he shall feel the pains: nevertheless, God's Spirit shall give strength to bear them, and also in Christ to overcome them.

There is no man that can have faith, but sometimes, and upon some occasion, it may be troubled and assaulted with mistrust; no man such charity, but that it may be, yea, and is troubled with hatred; no man such patience, but that it may at times feel impatience; no man such verity, but that it may be troubled with falsehood: howbeit, in the people of God, by God's help, the best overcometh the worst, and the virtue the sin. But in case the worst prevail and overcome, the man of God is never quiet, until he be restored unto God again, and unto the same virtues that he lost by sin: as ye may see in this king by many of his Psalms, that he believed, and found God to defend him, howsoever his state was; and therefore attributeth unto him the whole victory, and praise of his deliverance, saying, "Thou art with me, and dost overcome."

But now the Prophet declareth, how and by what

means God is with him, and doth deliver him from all troubles. And this means of God's presence and defence he openeth by divers allegories and translations, wonderful meet and apt to express the thing that he would shew to the world.

The first translation, or allegory, he taketh of the nature of a rod; the second, of a staff; and saith, they did comfort him, and defend him: the third he taketh of a table, which he saith the great Shepherd prepared before his face, against as many as troubled him: the fourth he taketh from the nature of oil, and of a cup that was always full, wherewith he was not only satisfied, but also joyfully replenished in all times and all troubles, whatsoever they were.

By the rod is many times in the Scripture understood the punishment and correction that God useth to call home again, and to amend, his elect and beloved people when they offend him: "He punisheth them, and yet killeth them not; he beateth them until they know their faults, but casteth them not away;" as he said to King David (2 Sam. vii.), that when he died, his kingdom should come unto one of his own children: and in case he went astray from his law, he would correct him with the rod of other princes, and with the plagues of the sons of men: "But my mercy (saith God) I will not take from him, as I did from Saul."

This same manner of speech may ye read also in his 89th Psalm; and in the Proverbs of his son King Solomon (chap. x.) ye have the same doctrine: "He that wanteth a heart, must have his back beaten with a rod." And in the same book he saith, "He that spareth the rod, hateth the child." So doth King David here confess, that it is a very necessary and requisite way, to keep the sheep of God from perishing, to be chastened and corrected when they were wapton, and will not hear the voice of their

Shepherd. And it is the part of every wise, godly man, to love this correction and chastisement of the Lord, as Solomon saith (Prov. xii.), "He that loveth discipline and correction, loveth knowledge; he that hateth to be rebuked, is a fool." And King David saith, "It is to my great good commolity, that the Lord chasteneth me." (Psalm cxix.) This rod of correction, David saith, is one of the instruments and means, wherewithal God preserveth his sheep from straying. Now in the Scripture sometimes the rod is taken, not for a correction that amendeth a man, but for the punishment and utter destruction of man, as David saith of Christ, "Thou shalt break them with an iron rod" (Psalm ii.); and in the Apocalypse ye may see the same. (Chap. xii.) But I will speak of the metaphors and translations none otherwise, than David doth use them in this place, for his purpose.

The staff which he speaketh of in Scripture, is taken for strength, power, and dominion; which staff is spoken of, as ye may see, in the books of the Kings, how the ambassadors and men of war sent from the king of the Assyrians to Hezekiah at Jerusalem, called the strength and power of the Egyptians, and also of the Almighty God, a staff of reed, and a broken weapon, not able to withstand the king of the Assyrians. (2 Kings, xviii.) And of such manner of speech ye may read many times in the Prophets. (Isa. x. xiv. xxviii. xxxix. Ezek. xxix.) But in this place David confesseth, that the staff of the Lord, that is to say, God's power, is so strong, that nothing is able to overcome it: his wisdom is such, that no man can make it foolishness: his truth is so true, that no man can make it false: his promise is so certain and sure, that no man can cause him to break or alter it: his love is so constant, that no man can withdraw it: his providence is

so wise, that no man can beguile him : his care is so great for his flock, that they can want nothing : his fold is so strong, that no beast can break it : he letteth his sheep so in and out, that no man can deceive him : he hath such a care of all, as he neglecteth not one : he so loveth the one, that he hateth not the other ; he so teacheth all, as none is left ignorant : he so calleth one, as all should be advertised : he so chasteneth one, as all should beware : he so receiveth one, as all should take hope and consolation : he so preserveth one, as all the rest may be assured, that he useth his staff and force to comfort one King David (as he saith, " Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me"), as all other should assure themselves to be safe under his protection.

In this metaphor and translation, under the name of a staff, King David hath declared the power of God to be such, that in case he should pass by and through thousands of perils, he would not care, for God is with him, with his rod and staff.

Then he setteth forth the third allegory, and expresseth another means, which God useth for the defence and consolation of his poor sheep, and saith, that God hath prepared a table in his sight, against all those that trouble him. By the name of a table, he setteth forth the familiar, and (in manner) fellow-like love, that the God omnipotent hath towards his sheep, with whom he useth not only friendship, but also familiarity, and disdaineth not (being the King of kings) to admit and receive unto his table, vile and beggarly sinners, scabbed and rotten sheep. That friendship and familiarity is marvellously set forth in this, that he made a table for David : as though David had said, " Who is he that can hurt me, when the Lord of lords doth not only love me, but admitteth me to be always familiarly in his company ?" The same manner of speech is used of King

David towards Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son. when he said he should only have the fields again of Saul his grandfather, but also be entertained at his own table, that is to say, used friendly, honourably, and familiarly. (2 Sam. ix.) This word (table) is diversly otherwise taken many times in the Scripture, but in this place it is nearest to the mind of King David, to take it in this signification that I have noted. And our Saviour Christ taketh it in the same signification, in St. Luke's Gospel, where he saith, his disciples shall eat with him at his table in the kingdom of God.

The fourth means that the heavenly Shepherd useth in keeping of his sheep, the Prophet setteth forth under the name of oil, and a full cup. In the word of God these words have also comfortable significations and meanings, extending to David's purpose. Isaac, when he had given the blessing from Esau to Jacob, said to Jacob, "God shall give thee of the dew from heaven, and from the fruitful ground thou shalt have abundance of corn, of wine, and oil," &c. (Gen. xxvii.) By the which blessing, he meaneth that Jacob should lack nothing to serve his needs, and to make him merry. And if we take David, that he meaneth by oil, as Isaac did, that at the Lord's table was all plenty, mirth, and solace, we take him not amiss: for so many times oil is taken for consolation and joy in the Scriptures. When Christ had purged the hurt man's wounds, first with smarting wine, he afterwards put into them sweet oil, to ease the smart and sharpness of the wine. (Luke, x.) And so likewise saith our Saviour Christ to Simon the Pharisee, that gave him meat enough for his dinner, but gave him no mirth: "Since I came into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet, nor oil for my head: this poor woman never ceased to wash my feet with the tears of her eyes, and to anoint them with oil."

(Lake, vii.) But in many Psalms King David useth this word "oil," to signify the Holy Ghost, as when he speaketh of our Saviour Christ: "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity; therefore hath God anointed thee with the oil of joy, above thy fellows." (Psalm xlv.) And this oil is not the material oil that kings and priests were anointed withal in the old time of the law, of whose confection we read in the book of the Levites: but this is the oil by whose efficacy, strength, and power, all things were made, that is to say, the Holy Ghost. And in his 89th Psalm he speaketh of the oil in the same signification. Therefore I take King David here, when he saith, God hath anointed his head with oil, that God hath illuminated his spirit with the Holy Ghost. And so is this place taken of godly men, his head taken for his mind, and oil for the Holy Ghost. And as oil nourisheth light, mitigateth labours and pains, and exhilarateth the countenance, so doth the Holy Ghost nourish the light and knowledge of the mind, replenisheth it with God's gifts, and rejoiceth the heart: therefore the Holy Ghost is called the oil of mirth and consolation. And this consolation cometh unto King David, and to all God's lively members, by the means of Christ, as St. Peter saith, "We be people chosen, and a princely priesthood," &c. (2 Pet. ii.)

By the word "cup," in this verse, he meaneth, that he is fully instructed in all godly knowledge, to live virtuously and godly for the time of this mortal life; and so is the cup in the Scripture taken for any thing that can happen unto us, whether it be adversity or prosperity, for they be called cups: as Christ said of his death, "Father, if it be possible, take this cup from me." (Matt. xxvi.) And David, in the 16th Psalm, useth it for man's prosperity in God. "The Lord (saith he) is the portion of mine inherit-

ance, and of my cup." And therein he speaketh in the name of Christ, whose inheritance is the whole number of the faithful, and saith, that his inheritance, which is the church, by God's appointment is blessed and happy; for no adversity can destroy it. This is meant by David's words, the rod, the staff, the table, the oil, and the cup: and he useth all these words, to declare the carefulness, love, and defence of God towards miserable man. And he could the better speak thereof unto others, because he had so many times felt, and had experience that God was both strong and faithful towards him in all time of danger and adversity.

And here is to be noted, that the dangers that man is subject unto in this life, be not alone such as heretofore King David hath made mention of, as sickness, treason, sedition, war, poverty, banishment, and the death of the body: but he felt also (as every man of God shall feel and perceive) that there be greater perils and dangers that man standeth in jeopardy of, than there be by occasion of sin, the mother of all man's adversity. Sin bringeth a man into the displeasure and indignation of God; the indignation of God bringeth a man into the hatred of God; the hatred of God bringeth a man into despair and doubtfulness of God's forgiveness; despair bringeth a man into everlasting pain; and everlasting pain continueth and punisheth the damned creature with fire never to be quenched, with God's anger and displeasure, which cannot be reconciled nor pacified.

These be the troubles of all troubles, and sorrows of all sorrows, as our Saviour Christ declareth in his most heavenly prayer, in St. John. "I do not (saith Christ to his heavenly Father) pray, that thou shouldest take those that I pray for out of the world, but that thou preserve them from evil." (John, xvii.)

And in this prayer he hath wonderfully taught us, that a Christian man is subject to two troubles: one of the body, and another of the soul; one of the world, and another of the devil. As for the troubles of the world, he saith, it is not so expedient, that Christian men be delivered from them, lest in idleness we should seek ourselves, and not God, as the children of Israel did: but this he knew was most necessary, that the Father should preserve us in the midst of these troubles with his help, from all sin and transgression of his holy laws: and this he assured his disciples of, and all others that put their trust in him, not that they should in this life be preserved and kept from troubles and adversities: but that the heavenly Father should always give unto his, such strength and virtue against all the enemies of God, and man's salvation, that they should not be overcome with troubles, that put their trust in him.

For God suffereth and appointeth his to fight and make war with sin, and with all troubles and sorrows that sin bringeth with it: but God will never permit his to be deadly and mortally wounded. It is therefore expedient that man know who be his greatest foes, and do work him most danger.

There be divers Psalms, wherein he setteth forth the peril that he was in, as well in his body as in his soul: as when he complaineth of his banishment, amongst not only cruel people, but also ungodly, that sought to take both his mortal life from him, and also his religion and trust that he had in God's word. Wherefore he compareth them to the Tartarians and Arabians, men without pity or religion. (Psalm cxx.) And the like doth he afterwards in another Psalm, where, giving thanks for his delivery, he saith that sinners trod upon his back, and many times warred against him, and he should have been overthrown, if God had not holpen him. (Psalm cxxix.) Where-

in he speaketh, not only of battle with the sword against the body ; but also of heresy and false doctrine against the soul. As ye may see how Sennacherib and Julian the Apostate, two emperors, fought against the people of God, not only to take from them their lives, but also their religion and true honouring of God. And of all battles that is the cruellest, and of all enemies the principal, that would take the soul of man from God's word, and bring it to the word of man. And that persecution and trouble openly against God's word continued many years, until Christ was preached abroad, and princes made Christians. Then thought the devil his kingdom would have been overthrown, and Christian men might live in Christ's religion, without any trouble or war for religion : howbeit at length for sin the devil entered by subtle means, not only to corrupt true religion, but also persecuted the true professors thereof under the name of true religion, and therein used a marvellous policy and craft, by men that walked inordinately amongst the Christians themselves. From whose companies, sects, and conversation, St. Paul willed us to refrain by these words : " We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye refrain from every one that is accounted a brother, that useth himself inordinately, and not according to the institution he received of us." (2 Thes. iii.) And because ye have not taken heed of this holy commandment, and kept yourselves from danger and peril of heresy, sin, idolatry, and superstition, by the rod and staff of God, nor have not eaten your meat of religion at God's table, nor your minds have been anointed with the Holy Ghost (as David in this Psalm saith that he was against all troubles by these means defended and maintained, that no peril of the body by the sword, no peril of the soul by false doctrine, could hurt him) : there-

fore mark a little, and see the dangers that have hurt both you and your conscience also, not like to be healed (as far as I can see), but more hurt hereafter. For the way to heal a man is to expel and put away sickness, and not to increase and continue the sickness.

From whom think ye that St. Paul commandeth you to refrain in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ? He saith, from him that behaveth himself inordinately. Who is that, think ye? St. Paul saith, He that ruleth not himself after the rule and institution that he himself had taught the Thessalonians. So that we must refrain then from all such, as conform not themselves to the institution of St. Paul: yea, although he be an angel from heaven. (Gal. i.) This departure from such as have ruled and put forth errors and lies, is not new, but hath been used in England of Englishmen, more than twenty years since we departed from the See of Rome, for the ambition of the Romish bishops that transgressed both this ordinance of St. Paul and also of Christ. Of the which deadly and pestilent ambition the Prophet Ezekiel prophesied (chap. xxxiv.), and so did also St. Paul (Acts, xx.) ; if prophecies by God, and commandments by his holy Apostles, had any thing prevailed in our dull and naughty hearts. Read the places, and see yourselves, what is spoken of such a wicked shepherd. I do put you in mind of this wicked See, because I do see, that, contrary to the word of God, contrary to the laws of the realm most godly against the Pope's supremacy, against all our oaths that be Englishmen, and against all the old godly writers, this antichrist and member of the devil is not unlike to have the regiment of your souls again, which God forbid. I do exhort all men, therefore, to beware of him, as of one that came naughtily to such usurped authority ; and whose au-

thority is not only the trouble of all Christian realms and princes, but also of all Christian souls. And as he hath been always a trouble unto the one, so hath he been a destruction to the other: as I will a little declare unto you, that ye may know him the better, and so by the rod and staff of God's word defend yourselves from him.

The Greek church, for this ambition of the Romish bishop, separated herself from the church of Rome, and would not have to do with her; for after that the Greeks knew, that the bishops of Rome meant to take from them their liberties, they would not endure it: yet did the Romish bishops always, to come to the supremacy, pick quarrels and matters to fall out upon, first with the clergy and then with the laity. Platina writeth how Pius bishop of Rome, being deceived by one Hermes, a very evil man, began a new order about the keeping of Easter-day, and altered the time that the Apostles and their disciples used, until Pius's days, which was to celebrate and keep the day of the resurrection of our Saviour Christ the fourteenth moon of the first month, which is with the Jews our March. And although it be well done to keep it upon the Sunday, yet was this an horrible presumption upon so light a cause, to excommunicate the Greek church, and to make division where before was union. It came to pass in Victor's time the first, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred, and in the time of Irenæus, the bishop of Lyons, the disciple of John the Evangelist, this Victor would have condemned the Greek church, and proceeded with excommunication against it, had not Irenæus letted it: yet was it the elder church, and had continued in the doctrine of the Apostles from Christ's time, and had John the Evangelist amongst them for the space of threescore and eight years after Christ's ascension. And not-

withstanding the Greek church was the elder church, yet the Roman church was made equal with them, according to the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, and also according to the decree that was made in the general council at Nice. And the Greek church never contended with the Romish church for the supremacy, until a proud and arrogant monk, that feigned humility, was preferred to be bishop of Constantinople, which came to such arrogance of spirit, that he would have been taken for the universal head of the church, which was a very mark to know that he was of antichrist, and not of Christ, as Gregory the Great writeth to Constantia the Empress : and at length this proud monk, at a synod kept at Constantinople, created himself the universal head of the church. Although before his time one Menna, and other archbishops of Constantinople, for the dignity of the imperial state being there, were called universal patriarchs, yet that was by name alone, and without execution of authority in any foreign bishopric or church. But such was the ambition of these bishops, that walked (as St. Paul saith) inordinately, that they would have the head and principality of religion and of the church at Constantinople, because there was the head and principality of the worldly kingdom ; and so they began betimes to confound the civil policy, with the policy of the church, until they brought themselves not only to be heads of the church, but also lords of all emperors and kings, and at the last of God and God's word : as ruthfully it appeareth in men's conscience at this present day. Which abomination and pride Pelagius, the bishop of Rome, both spake and wrote against, and would that he nor any man else should have the name of a general bishop. And St. Gregory doth confirm the same godly sentence of his predecessor Pelagius, and would not, when he was commanded by the Emperor, whom

John the bishop had abused, take the archbishop of Constantinople for the universal head, nor condescend unto the Emperor's commandment, and wrote to the Empress that it was contrary to the ordinance of Christ and his Apostles, and contrary to the council of Nice. He said also, that such new arrogance was a very token that the time of antichrist drew nigh. And Gregory did not only write and speak against this arrogance and pride, but suffered also great danger (as Platina writeth), and so did all Rome, by the Lombards, that Mauricius the Emperor made to besiege Rome, because Gregory refused to obey the archbishop of Constantinople as the head of the church.

But although Pelagius, Gregory, and other godly men, detested and abhorred this wicked arrogance to be the universal head of the church, yet the bishop of Ravenna began among the Latins to prepare the way to antichrist, as Paulus Diaconus saith, and separated himself from the society of other churches, to the intent he might come to be a head himself. But what at length came of it Platina writeth. And within a short time after, Boniface the Third being the bishop of Rome, about the year of our Lord six hundred and seven, Phocas, the Emperor, judged him to be head of the church, against both the bishop of Constantinople, and also of Ravenna : and such a sentence was meet for such an arbiter. Phocas was a wicked man, a covetous man, an adulterer, and a traitorous murderer of his lord and master, Mauricius ; and this man, to make God and the Romans amends, gave sentence that the bishop of Rome should be the universal head of the church. But here were condemned the sentence and doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, and also the decrees of the holy council of Nice. And no marvel : for they condemned both parties

of arrogance and usurpation; and not only these councils, but all others, for many years, which decreed, that although one seat was named before the other, yet the bishop of the principal seat should not be the chiefest priest or head of the rest, but only he should be called the bishop of the chiefest seat; and how much it is against St. Cyprian, they may see that will read his works, and also against St. Hierome. But what law can rule wickedness? This wicked See contended still, after Phocas had given sentence with it for the supremacy; yet were the bishops of Rome always subject to the Emperors, as well of Constantinople as of France, for the time of their reign; yea, four hundred years and odd, after the judgment of Phocas, they were in this obedience, and were made by the Emperors until the time of Gregory the Seventh, who, in the time of great sedition, translated the empire into Germany, and never used jurisdiction in emperors nor kings, nor yet in the citizens of Rome; but only desired to have all bishops' causes to be decerned by the See of Rome, yet could not obtain so much at those days, as appeareth by the council of Africa, whereat Boniface the First could not obtain with craft, nor with his lies, that he made of the canons decreed in the council of Nice, to have causes deferred to the See of Rome.

And as for this name, "Pope," it was a general name to all bishops, as it appeareth in the Epistles of Cyprian, Hierome, Austin, and of other old bishops and doctors, which were more holy and better learned than those latter ambitious and glorious enemies of Christ and Christ's church. Read the text, Distinct. 50, cap. "De eo tamen, &c. absit" (Hist. lib. ii. cap. xxvii.); and there shall ye see that the clergy of Rome, in their letters, called Cyprian Pope; and Clodovius, the King of France,

named the bishop of Rome, as he did other bishops, a bishop.

This was the state of the primitive church, which was both near unto Christ in time, and like unto him in doctrine, and kept St. Paul's equality, where, as he saith (Gal. ii.), he was appointed among the Gentiles, as Peter was among the Jews. And although the bishops in the time of Constantine the Great obtained, that among bishops there should be some that should be called archbishops and metropolitans; yet all they were not instituted to be heads generally of the church, but to the end they should take more pains to see the church well ordered and instructed: and yet this pre-eminence was at the liberty and discretion of princes, and not always bound unto one place, and one sort of prelates, as the wickedness of our time believeth: as ye may see in the councils of Chalcedon and Africa. So that it is manifest, this superior pre-eminence is not of God's laws, but of man's, instituted for a civil policy: and so was the church of Constantinople equal with the church of Rome. And, in our days, Erasmus Roterodamus writeth and saith, this name (to be high bishop of the world) was not known to the old church: but this was used, that bishops were all called high priests: and that name gave Urban the First unto all bishops, as it is written in *Distinct. 59, cap. Si officia. Anno Dom. CCXXVI.* But as for one to be head of all, it was not admitted. And the Greek church did never agree to this wicked supremacy, nor obeyed it until the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and two, compelled thereunto by one Baldwin, that brought the Frenchmen, by the help of the Venetians, unto Constantinople, to restore one Alexius unto the empire, upon this condition, that he should subdue the Greek church to the church of Rome.

But this came to pass, that the Pope, never after he had gotten by alms and help of princes to be over them, passed one iota for the Emperor of Constantinople, further than he served his turn. So that ye may see both his beginning and proceedings to be, of the devil; which if ye kill not with the staff of God's word, and beat him from your conscience, he will double-kill your souls.

Now, within one hundred and fifty years after Phocas had made the bishop of Rome head of the church, the bishop of Rome contemned the Emperor of Constantinople, and devised to bring the empire into France, and to give the King of France the same authority over the bishop of Rome that before the Emperor had, as it appeareth in Charles the Great, and his successors, a long time: and yet was the bishop of Rome under the princes, and not (as he is now) an idol exempt from all order and obedience. For princes made the bishops of Rome, and all other bishops, within their realms, and so continued the making of the Pope in the Emperor's authority, until it was about the year of our Lord one thousand one hundred and ten. After that, Henry the Fifth, being sore molested with sedition, moved against him by the Pope Paschal the Second, was constrained at length to surrender his authority unto him, who turned the face of his bishoprick into manifest wars. What followed when the Pope was thus free, and lived without obedience to the Christian magistrates, I will not, in this treatise, make mention, but put you in remembrance that for certainty there followed such trouble among Christian princes, as never was before, as it is to be seen by the doing of the wicked man Gregory the Seventh, who took then upon him to have authority to use two swords, the spiritual and the temporal; insomuch that Henry the

Fourth was compelled, threescore and two times, to make war in his life, by the means of the bishop of Rome. And, as it is written (Alberus Crantzius, Ecclesiast. Histor. lib. vi.), this wicked bishop stirred up the Emperor's own brother-in-law, Radulphus, the Duke of Suevia, to war against him, and sent him a crown of gold with this verse graven on it:

"Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Radulpho."

That is to say, "Christ gave the empire to Peter, Peter giveth it to Radulph." Meaning that Christ had given the empire worldly to the bishop of Rome, and he gave it to Radulph. Ye may see what a rod the Emperors made for their own tail. For, after they had made the bishop of Rome head of the church, the bishops made themselves shortly after the heads of Emperors and Kings:—a just plague of God for all them that will exalt such to rule, as God said should be ruled.

These bishops be not only proud, but also unthankful. For whereas all the world knoweth the bishop's authority to come from the Emperor in worldly things, and not from God, but against God; this monster, Gregory the Seventh, said, that Christ gave him the empire of Rome, and he giveth it to the Duke of Suevia, Radulph, to kill his good brother Henry the Fourth. He that will know more of this wicked man, and of his brethren bishops of Rome, let him read Benno the Cardinal, that writeth, in his History of the Popes, that he saw of John the Twentieth, Benedict the Ninth, Silvester the Third, Gregory the Sixth, Leo the Ninth, Alexander the Second. But in his old days he saw and writeth horrible and execrable things of Gregory the Seventh. Yet was England free from this beast of Rome then, in respect of that it was

before the idol was expelled in King Henry the Eighth's time. But Alexander the Third never rested to move men to sedition until such time as King Henry the Seventh was content to be under him as others were. And all this suffered England for Thomas Becket, the Pope's martyr.

When they were crept up into this high authority, all their own creatures, bishops of their sect, cardinals, priests, monks, and friars, could never be contented to be under the obedience of the princes: and, to say the truth, princes durst not (in manner), require it, for they were in danger of goods and life. And the Emperor Henry the Seventh was poisoned by a monk, that poisoned the idol of the mass, both a god and minister meet to poison men, and both of the Pope's making. And what conscience did they make of this, think ye? Doubtless none at all; for the Pope saith, and so do all his children, that he can dispense and absolve themselves, and all men, from what oaths soever they have made to God or man. This enemy, with his false doctrine, is to be resisted and overcome by the word of God, or else he will destroy both body and soul. Therefore, against all his crafts and abominations, we must have the rod, the staff, the table, the oil, and the cup, that David speaketh of, in a readiness to defend ourselves withal.

Now followeth the last part of this holy hymn.

THE SEVENTH PART OF THE PSALM.
WHAT THE END OF GOD'S TROUBLED PEOPLE SHALL
BE.

Ver. 6. *Thy loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

I will, in the midst of all troubles, be strong and of good cheer; for I am assured, that thy mercy

and goodness will never forsake me, but will continually preserve me in all dangers of this life : and when I shall depart from this bodily life, thy mercy will bring me into that house of thine eternal joy, where I shall live with thee in everlasting felicity.

Of this part we learn, that the dangers of this life be no more than God can and will put from us, or preserve us in them, when they come unto us, without danger ; also that the troubles of this world be not perpetual nor damnable for ever, but that they be for a time only sent from God, to exercise and prove our faith and patience. At the last we learn, that, the troubles being ended, we begin and shall continue for ever in endless pleasure and consolation, as David sheweth at the end of his Psalm. So doth Christ make an end with his disciples, when he hath committed them, for the time of this life, to the tuition of the heavenly Father, whilst he is bodily absent : he saith, at length, they shall be where he is himself, in heaven for ever. For in this life, albeit the faithful of God have consolation in God's promises, yet is their joy very dark and obscure, by reason of troubles both without and within : outwardly by persecution, inwardly by temptation. Therefore, Christ desireth his Father to lead and conduct his church in truth and verity, whilst it is here in fight and persecution with the devil, until it come to a perfect and absolute consolation, where no trouble may molest it. For then, and not before (to what perfection soever we come), shall we be satisfied, as David saith : " The plentifulness of pleasure and joy is in the sight and contemplation of thee, O Lord ! " (Psalm xvi.) For then shall the mind of man fully be satisfied, when he, being present, may presently behold the glorious majesty of God : for God hath then all joys present to him that is present with him, and

HOOVER.—EXPOSITION OF THE 23D PSALM. 551

then man knoweth God, as he is known of God. (1 Cor. xiii.) These joys in the end of troubles, should give the troubled man the more courage to bear troubles patiently, and be persuaded (as St. Paul teacheth), that the troubles of this present life be not worthy of the joys to come, which shall be revealed to us, when Christ cometh to judge the quick and the dead. (Rom. viii.) To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and praise, world without end. Amen.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE SIXTY-SECOND PSALM.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Prophet in this Psalm doth declare (by his own experience) how the truth of God's word, and such as favour and follow the same, be esteemed and used in the world, of worldly men, the truth itself rejected, and the lovers thereof slandered and persecuted. And seeing truth and true men, before the Prophet's time, in his time, and after his time, were thus miserably afflicted; in this Psalm he writeth his own condition and miseries, with certain and most comfortable remedies, which ways the afflicted person may best comfort himself, and pass over the bitterness and dangers of his troubles, and suffer them, as long as God layeth them upon him, patiently. So that whosoever, from the feeling of his heart, can say this Psalm, and use the remedies prescribed therein, by the Spirit of God; doubtless he shall be able to bear the troubles both of the devil and man patiently, and condemn them strongly.

The parts of the Psalm be in number generally two.

I. In the first is contained, how that the favour of God, and his help, are able to remedy all adversities.

II. In the second is contained, how that the favour of man, and his help, are able to redress no adversities.

The first part comprehendeth eight verses of the Psalm. The second part containeth the other four verses that next follow to the end of the Psalm.

MOOSE.—EXPOSITION OF THE 62D PSALM. 553

These two general parts do contain more particular parts in them, in number six.

i. First, what is to be done by the Christian man that is afflicted.

ii. The second part sheweth why the troubled man in trouble looketh for help of God.

iii. The third part declareth how suddenly God can destroy the persecutors of the truth.

iv. The fourth part containeth the repetition of the first and the second part, with more causes shewed why patiently trouble is to be borne, and faithfully to be believed that God can and will remedy it.

v. The fifth part declareth, that man's power is not to be feared, nor his friendship to be trusted unto; for no man is able to damn or save.

vi. The sixth part setteth forth, how that God hath promised to help the afflicted, and will assuredly perform it.

The Psalm with the Parts before named, where they begin, and where they end.

1. "My soul truly waiteth still upon God."

The first part teacheth a man to fly unto God in the time of oppression and trouble.

2. "For of him cometh my salvation: he verily is my strength and my salvation; he is my defence, so shall I not greatly fall."

The second Part of the Psalm, that declareth why the troubled Man trusteth in God.

3. "How long will ye imagine mischief against every man? Ye shall be slain all the sort of you: yea, as a tottering wall shall ye be, and like a broken hedge.

4. "Their device is only how to put him out, whom God will exalt: their delight is in lies: they

give good words with their mouths, but curse with their heart. *Selah.*"

The third Part of the Psalm, wherein is shewed, that suddenly the Persecutors of the Innocent shall perish.

5. " Nevertheless, my soul, wait thou still upon God, for my hope is in him.

6. " He truly is my strength and my salvation; he is my defence, so that I shall not fall.

7. " In God is my health and my glory, the rock of might: and in God is my trust.

8. " O put your trust in him always, ye people; pour out your hearts before him, for God is our hope. *Selah.*"

In these four verses is contained the fourth part; wherein is mentioned the repetition of the two first verses.

9. " As for the children of men, they are but vain; the children of men are deceitful upon the weights; they are altogether lighter than vanity itself.

10. " O trust not in wrong and robbery; give not yourselves to vanity: if riches increase, set not your hearts upon them."

Here is the fifth part, that teacheth no trust to be put in man; for he is not able to damn nor save.

11. " God spake once, and twice I have also heard the same, that power belongeth unto God:

12. " And that thou, Lord, art merciful, for thou rewardest every man according to his work."

In these two verses is comprehended the sixth part, which is, that God hath promised to be merciful in helping the afflicted, and that he will perform his promises.

A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM GENERALLY:

"My soul doubtless waiteth still upon God," &c. Be my troubles never so great and dangerous, yet my soul shall trust continually and constantly in the Lord, that can and will remedy them: for he is my strength and my salvation; and he is my defence.

"So shall I not greatly fall." Although, good Lord, by reason of my infirmity and sin, which is in all men, my soul is weak and feeble, that it will be oppressed with the lightest of all thy troubles, which thou layest upon man for his sin; yet, when it taketh hold of thy mercy, it waxeth strong. And although it be weak and trembling by reason of infirmity, yet doth it not clean fall from the trust of constancy and hope.

And let the wicked imagine their wicked imaginations against thy poor servants, O God: yet at length shall they come to shame and destruction, as the tottering wall doth fall, and the rotten hedge is consumed with fire. For that they go about, they shall never bring to pass, because they devise to put him to shame, that God hath purposed to exalt and magnify. And whatsoever doubleness they use to speak fair with their mouths, and yet have false and hollow hearts, it shall not bring their intent to their purposed end. Selah. God be thanked, of whom dependeth all the hope of my salvation: and he is my strength, my salvation, and my defence, so that I shall not fall.

Wherefore, all Christian and afflicted persons (saith the Prophet), follow mine example, and put all your hope and trust in the mercy of God, who only saves us from evil, and blesses us with all goodness. Pour out therefore before him all your cares and heaviness, and look assuredly for help from him, for doubtless the help of man is nothing worth: for "if

man and vanity were both weighed in a pair of balances, vanity itself would be weightier than man. How then can so light a thing as man is, help in the time of trouble?" And as a man is but vanity, or else more than vanity; so be all worldly riches that man possesseth, and as little or less able to help an afflicted man, as man is unable to help himself.

And this I know (saith the Prophet), not by man's wisdom, but by the mouth of God, that whatsoever help man looketh for, besides God, he may be assured at all times to be both helpless and comfortless; and trusting to God, he shall be at all times both holpen and comforted: for so saith the Lord, whose sayings no power is able to falsify nor to resist.

What Things are to be noted out of every particular Part of this Psalm, for the Edifying and Comfort of him that shall use to say, sing, or meditate this Psalm.

THE FIRST PART.

"My soul truly waiteth upon God."

Out of the first part (wherein is contained what the Christian should do in the time of trouble) is to be noted what it is for a man to have his soul waiting still upon God, or else to have silence always in his soul towards God in the days of adversity, as this Psalm speaketh. When the Christian man or woman, in the time of sorrow and heaviness, without grudge or impatience looketh for the help of God, and giveth not himself to quarrelling or complaining of God, as though he did him wrong, and punished him too much; then doth the soul wait upon the Lord, or else hath silence towards God, as we see by Job, where his soul still attended upon the Lord. When his goods, cattle, house, and children were taken

from him, he said after this sort: "The Lord gave them, the Lord hath taken them away; as the Lord is pleased, so is it done. The name of the Lord be blessed." (Job, i.) All this while he bore the cross of God without murmur or grudge, and had his soul still waiting upon God, as this Prophet here saith. But when he was burdened further, and from the sole of the foot to the top of the head was stricken with sores and blotches; he cursed the day that he was born in, and the night wherein he was conceived, with many more unquiet and lamentable words, as it appeareth in his book. (Job, iii.)

The like example we have before of King David in the book of the Psalms, where be these words: "In trouble and adversity I said, I was cast away from the sight of thine eyes, O God." (Psalm xxxi.) And as Job sometime said, if he should die, yet would he trust in the Lord (Job, xiii. xvii.); so said David a little before, if he should go in the midst of the shadow of death, he would not fear. (Psalm xxiii.) In the which Psalm ye may see how constantly his soul waited upon the Lord: yet in the 31st Psalm his troubles were so great, that in them he said, "I am cast from the sight of thee, O God." So that these testimonies and examples of the Scriptures do declare, that to have the soul to wait upon the Lord, is to be assured that God will help in trouble, and patiently to bear the trouble without grudge, until God send remedy and help for it.

The second thing to be gathered of the first part, is to mark and see, that in the very elect of God, and most excellent personages amongst holy men, there is sometime quiet, patient, and thankful sufferance of adversity strongly, that it seemeth in the soul of him that is troubled, there is so constant and strong faith, that it maketh all sorrows and troubles rather pleasant and sweet, than heavy, burdensome, or pain-

ful. At another time troubles seem unto them so heinous and grievous, that the burden of them is as great a pain as death, not only in quieting the body, but also very sore vexing of the spirit, with these and like cogitations: "God hath cast me out of his sight; God will have mercy upon me no more; my soul is heavy and troubled." (Psalm xxxi. xlii. xliii. lxxvii.) And this diversity of increase and decrease of faith and hope of holy men and women before our time teacheth us great wisdom and consolation; wisdom, in that we see faith and hope be not natural qualities in man, although he be never so virtuous, or never so graciously elected by God to eternal salvation: but they be the merciful gifts of God given unto man for Christ's sake, and wrought by the Holy Ghost above man's deservings.

We learn also that the gifts of God, faith, hope and charity, patience and sufferance, with such-like virtues, be not at all times of like condition and strength in man, but at some time so strong, that nothing can fear us, and at another time so weak, that all things do make us dismayed and fearful. Now and then it is so doubtful, that we cannot tell whether it were best to suffer for the truth, or else to be released, consenting unto falsehood. Thus God useth his gifts in us, not always after one sort, partly for our sins, and partly to prove us, and to bring us to a certain knowledge of our infirmity and weakness. From Saul, Judas, and Cain, he took his Spirit clean, to punish their iniquity and wickedness; and from Job, to attempt his patience, and to make him feel that of himself he could bear nothing.

We learn consolation out of this text in this, that in our troubles the Lord forsaketh us not, but comforteth us; and the more our troubles and adversities be, the more is his grace and favour towards us. As the Prophet saith in another of his Psalms: "As

adversities oppressed my heart, so thy consolations, Lord, rejoiced me" (Psalm xlv.): in the which Psalm ye may see what consolation the afflicted conscience taketh in adversities.

The Psalm is made against the wicked oppressors and persecutors of the poor: wherein they say, As the tyranny of the wicked troubleth us, so thy consolations, good Lord, do rejoice and comfort us. And the same saith St. Paul to the Corinthians: "As the afflictions of Christ do abound in us, even so by Christ aboundeth our consolation." (2 Cor. i.)

There is also to be noted, in that the Prophet saith, his soul waiteth upon the Lord.

Many men can dissemble injuries, wrongs, and oppressions outwardly. (Matt. x. xxvi. John, xi. xviii. Luke, xix.) Sometimes, when they be not able to revenge; and sometimes, when they dare not revenge, for lack of opportunity and occasion, lest more harm might ensue of that their enterprise. As the Jews durst not kill Christ a great while, for fear of the people; yet were they murderers in their hearts before God, the fact outwardly not then being done. Some again revenge, not, because they think dissembled patience will gain worldly commodities and riches. Howbeit, this quietness and refraining from revenging is nothing worth before God. But when the heart and soul waiteth upon God, and is contented to be as God maketh it, the waiting and service of the soul the Lord delighteth in, and is pleased withal.

This is a godly doctrine, and much to be desired, to have the mind contented with such things as be troublesome and painful to the body inwardly: and where the mind waiteth not patiently upon the Lord in trouble, it will appear divers ways. Sometimes, many years after the displeasure is done, the man that suffered the displeasure revengeth it wrongfully and

cruelly : as the Pharisees and the high priests deferred the bloody fact in the killing of Christ until they had gotten time and opportunity for their purpose. Sometime the impatience and unquietness of the mind appeareth with checks and taunting answers unto God ; as when God asked Cain, where his brother Abel was ? he asked God again, whether he were his brother's keeper, or no ? (Gen. iv.) The same ways appeared Pharaoh's unquietness. When God would have had him to dismiss his people, he asked what God he was, unto whom he should do such homage and service. (Exod. v.) Sometime it appeareth by desperate weighing the greatness of trouble, not considering the mercy of God, that it is greater than sin. As Cain's unquieted soul for the killing of Abel brought his tongue to blaspheme the mercy of God, saying, that his iniquity was greater than the mercy of God could forgive (Gen. iv.) ; so did the wicked soul of Judas, that betrayed Christ, make his tongue confess before the Pharisees his treason and wickedness, and never to call upon Christ for the remission thereof. (Matt. xxvii.) Sometime the impatience of the mind is known outwardly, by finding fault with God's works : as when Adam's mind was unquieted for the eating of the apple, he said unto God, that his wife, the woman that he gave unto him, deceived him. (Gen. iii.) Ahab the wicked king being impatient with the scourges that God sent upon his realm for his own sins and the people's, picked a quarrel with the good Prophet Elias, and said, that he troubled all his realm. (1 Kings, xviii.) So said the Jews against Paul : " This is he that troubleth all the world." (Acts, xxi. xxiii.)

This is daily seen, whensoever the mind and the soul are unquieted : the fault is laid upon God's work : as if the higher powers hang a true man, and save a thief ; deliver Barabbas, and hang Christ ;

straightway the tongue walketh, that he is set in authority by God. Indeed so he is, but yet to punish the evil, and to maintain the good, and not to molest the good, and maintain the evil, as commonly now-a-days is seen. Simon Magus shall be at liberty, and Simon Peter in chains: Annas and Caiaphas shall rule like lords; Christ and St. Paul shall be ruled, and suffer death; although not personally in their own bodies, yet in their members and disciples.

Let the mind of the thief be touched for theft; straightway poverty, the work of God, beareth the blame. Let whoredom vex the whoremonger's mind; immediately the tongue complaineth upon God's work, youth, strength, and such other. Let the mind be troubled with covetousness; by and by God's work, wife, children, be alleged for excuse, for they must be provided for, saith the covetous man; when he hath enough for himself and ten times as many more children as God has sent him, if it were thankfully used towards God, and liberally towards the world: so that if any man be touched with anguish or heaviness for sin, immediately the tongue saith, he was born under an evil planet, or in an evil hour, and so findeth fault with the work of God, which God made excellent good. (Gen. i.)

Thus may ye see, where the soul of man waiteth not upon God, the impatient man accuseth God and all his works, both in heaven and in earth. But the godly, feeling the rod of God for sin and iniquity (Prov. xviii.), as God never punisheth without just cause, he first accuseth himself, and acknowledgeth his own offences; and then saith with the Prophet Micah, "I will suffer the indignation of God, for I have deserved it." (Mic. vii.)

To this waiting upon the Lord without quarrelling and desperate lamenting, exhorted Jeremiah the

Prophet the children of Israel, for the time of their being in servitude and captivity at Babylon ; bidding them to plant and graft trees, and so to provide for themselves, until the time were expired of their affliction and captivity.

Men may mourn and lament their sins and troubles that they suffer for sin ; as we may see how the Psalm of the Prophet containeth the bewailing and weeping of the people, that sate heavily and lamentably by the river-side in Babylon. (Psalm cxxxvii.) And the like may ye read in the Lamentations of Jeremiah. But this mourning was without desperation and quarrelling, as the letters and books do record. Besides these things, the cause of their bewailing and lamenting, whilst their souls waited upon the Lord, differeth from the most sort of mourners and bewailers now-a-days : for we may see now-a-days, if the wife bewail the death of her husband, it is most commonly because she hath taken from her a loving head and governor. If the husband lament the departure of his wife, it is because he is bereaved of a faithful helper. If the son mourn for the death of his father, it is because there is taken from him, not only his father, but also his patron and defender. If the parents be sorry for the taking away of their children, it is because they want their dalliance, sport, and pastime with them, or such other worldly affections. If the prince take grievously the calling away of his subject from this world, it is because he lacketh a trusty soldier, a faithful captain, a wise counsellor, or profitable officer. If the subject lament the death of his prince, it is because he hath lost his advantage, authority, or estimation. If the servant weep for his master, it is because with his master is departed his commodity, and trust of worldly riches and friendship. If the master mourn for his servant, it is because there is taken from him a skilful, a diligent, or a faithful

doer of his business ; and such-like causes as men grievously of every sort feel and lament. If the parson lament his parishioner, it is most commonly because he seeth the breach of an honest household decayeth his tenths and profits : and if the parishioner mourn for his pastor, most commonly it is, because he lost a good companion or profitable friend. If the bishop bewail the death of such as die in his diocese, it is most commonly because he is destitute of such an one, as favoured much affection to set forth and do such things as he worldly desired should go forward ; or else perchance such manner of one as could excuse him, what negligence or fault soever he should perpetrate or commit for the time he were in office. If the diocese be sorry for the death of the bishop, it is because the one part (which is the clergy) doth fear lest there shall come another that will be more diligent and quick in doing his office, and see that they shall do the same : the other party (called the temporalty) lament, because they have lost such an one as peradventure fed well their bellies with bread and beef ; or else was so remiss, that he would suffer all sin unpunished, and rather be a bearer of the evil, than a maintainer of the good. Now this is such bewailing and mourning as ethnics, publicans, and infidels may have. But wherefore the Christian soul, that waiteth upon the Lord without quarrel or desperation, doth weep and lament, read you the Psalm before named, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah ; and there shall you find in the Psalm these words : “ We sate by the rivers of Babylon and wept, when we remembered thee, O Sion.”

The chiefest cause of their weeping was, because the word of God was not preached, the sacraments ministered, nor the Almighty God lauded and praised in the temple of Jerusalem, as God had com-

manded by his word. This is a most just and also a most worthy cause to weep for, whilst God promiseth us, that for our sins, not only our quietness and wealth, but also the word of God (which is greater), is taken away, and his due honour given unto idols; for the children of Israel perceiving that God's honour was defaced for their sins, they wept as often as they remembered it, as God give us grace to do the same. The like did St. Peter: he lamented not because he left all his goods for Christ's sake, but wept that by his denial of Christ he felt himself not constant in the faith and love of his Master. (Matt. xxvii.) So did Mary Magdalen bewail that she had offended Christ; and not because the world knew her to be a sinner. (Luke, vii.)

St. John Chrysostom hath a notable saying: "He that feareth more hell than Christ, is worthy of hell." And what meant the Prophet when he cried out, "What is there in heaven or in earth, that I prefer before thee, O Lord?" (Psalm lxxiii.) As though he had said: There is nothing can make me as glad, as thy love towards me, nor any thing so sorry, as thy displeasure, good Lord.

Thus doth the soul of the very Christian wait upon the Lord in all troubles and adversities, and patiently doth bear the punishments of sin; and not only bear patiently the pain, but also considereth, what is the greatest loss that may happen unto him, by reason of troubles: not the loss of worldly riches, lands, and promotions, nor the loss of health of body by sickness, neither the loss of the body itself by death, nor yet the loss of the soul into eternal pains. But the greatest loss that he weigheth, is the loss of the good will of Him that made him, and of great mercy redeemed him, and with much kindness always nourished him.

That is to be seen in the prodigal son, which when

he had spent all his goods lecherously, and brought himself to most miserable poverty, and to such extreme famine, that he would have been glad to have eaten the meat prepared for the pigs, besides the great heaviness of heart, that weighed the time of prosperity, and conferred it with his estate of so extreme misery; yet nothing made him so sorry and pensive, as the calling to his remembrance how un-reverently he had used his most gentle, loving, and benign father, who was not only liberal and free to his children, but also to his hirelings that lacked nothing. (Luke, xv.) This consideration of his offence towards his father, made him a great deal more sorry than all the pains he otherwise sustained. And thus must every Christian wait upon the Lord, and then doubtless consolation shall follow, as it appeareth by the same prodigal son, and by this Psalm of the Prophet.

Moreover, if we mark with what dangers and troubles the soul seeketh her Lord and spouse Jesus Christ, in the mystical book of Solomon's Ballads, we shall see, with what attendance, diligence, and patience, the soul waiteth upon Christ. "I sought him (saith the soul), but I found him not. I called him, and he would not answer me. The watchmen of the city found me, and beat me, and wounded me. They took my robe from me that kept the walls. I require you, ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my spouse, tell him that I am sick with love." (Sol. Song, v.) Note these words: "I sought him (saith the soul), and found him not. I called him, and he answered not." Was not this enough to have clean discomfited the heavy, sick, and troubled soul, that ran and cried to her love and husband Jesus Christ, and yet for the time never the nearer? Further, in running and calling for him, the soul fell into the hands of her enemies,

that robbed her of her mantle; and yet, notwithstanding these dangers, she cried out unto all that she met, that in case they found her spouse, they would tell him that she was sick with his love.

Ponder these things altogether: first, to travail and cry, and not to profit: next, in travailing and crying, to lose all her goods, yea the mantle that she went in: thirdly, to put her life in danger with confessing Christ to be her spouse, before such as hated him mortally. And yet how did this Christian creature? Doubtless waited upon the Lord, without murmur or grudge. And in all these troubles note there is no complaint nor quarrel made of her prayers that were not heard, of the pains that for the time profited not, of the loss of her goods and apparel, nor yet of the danger that she was in, of her and Christ her spouse's enemies. But here was the weeping, lamentation, and sorrow, that Christ her spouse could not be found; in whose love she burned so ardently, that all adversities grieved her not, neither did she any thing at all esteem them; but only the want of Christ was her grief and sorrow: yet was she patient, and trusted still in the Lord.

The like may ye see by the woman of Canaan, how she called upon the Lord for her daughter: unto whom Christ made no word of answer. Further, his disciples were troubled and wearied by her importunate suit. Also Christ called her in manner no better than a dog; yet was there neither the bitterness of his words nor the inhumanity of his Apostles, that she passed for, but she waited still upon the Lord, and was nothing sorrowful for all the sharp words she suffered; but only because the help of the Lord was not extended and bestowed upon her daughter, as she desired. (Matt. xv.) But what ensueth of such a patient expectation, and sorrowfulness of God's absence? Mark what the Prophet saith.

THE SECOND PART OF THE PSALM.

Ver. 1. *For of him cometh my salvation.*

Ver. 2. *He verily is my strength and my salvation : he is my defence, so shall I not greatly fall.*

The second part declareth why the troubled person seeketh health of God.

Here first be three doctrines to be noted :

First, to know by God's word, that God can help; the second, that God will help : and the third, that the afflicted is bound, boldly to require help of God; Whereof the troubled person must be assured by the Scripture, or else he shall never find consolation.

Now to the first part, that God can help : this Scripture is to be marked, that saith, God is omnipotent, that is to wit, able to do all things. So said he to Abraham, when he eftsoons promised him the land of Canaan : "I am the God omnipotent ; walk before me, and be perfect." (Gen. xvii.) The same said Jacob, when Benjamin his young son was so instantly desired by his brethren to go into Egypt, when they lacked corn : "My God omnipotent (said Jacob) can make the prince of Egypt favourable unto you." (Gen. xliii.) So did God tell Moses, that he was the Lord that appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, even the Almighty God, (Exod. vi.) The like is in the same book, when God had drowned Pharaoh and his host : Moses gave thanks, and said his name was Almighty. (Exod. xv.) Thus in the word of God we may learn every where, as well by his name, as by his most marvellous works, that he is omnipotent, and there is nothing impossible unto him.

Even so doth the word of God declare, that, as he is omnipotent, and can save : in like manner is he willing, and will save. King David saith, that he

saveth both man and beast. (Psalm xxvi.) In another Psalm he saith, God saved him from all adversities. (Psalm xxxiv.) And again he saith, he will save all that trust in him; and not only save, but also save for nothing. (Psalm xxxvi. lvi.) So God saith by the Prophet Isaiah: "I will save thy children." (Chap. xlix.) And in the same book it is declared, that God's hand is not weakened; but that he can save, and will save. (Chap. lix.) This willing nature of God to save, is manifestly opened unto us in all the Prophets. (Jer. xv. xxiii. Ezek. xxxiv. Dan. xii. Hos. i. Zeph. iii. Zech. viii. ix. x.) And in St. Matthew Christ saith, he came to save such as were lost. (Chap. xviii.) The same is to be seen in St. Luke (chap. ix.), how that the Son of man came not to damn, but to save. St. John the Evangelist saith, his coming was to save the world. (Chap. iii.) And St. Paul saith, he would all men to be saved. (1 Tim. ii.)

Now as the word of God and the examples contained in the same, declare that God can and will help in the time of trouble and adversity; so doth it declare that men be bound to call and seek for help in the time of adversity. As we read in Isaiah the Prophet, where God crieth out in this sort: "Ye that be athirst, come to the waters," &c. (Isaiah, lv.) In St. Matthew Christ commandeth all men that be troubled to come unto him. (Matt. xi.) Also in the Psalms, he biddeth all men call upon him in the days of their heaviness, and he will hear them, and deliver them. (Psalm l.) Again, he willet us to ask, and it shall be given unto us. (Matt. vii. xviii. Mark, xi. Luke, xi. John, xiv. xv. xvi. 1 John, v.)

Now as these three doctrines are to be marked in the Almighty God, so must they be grounded in the heart of the troubled person. And first he must give this honour unto God, that he alone is able to

save, and none but he: as the Prophet Isaiah saith of him. (Chap. xlv.)

Then being thus persuaded, the afflicted person will not seek help at dead saints, nor at any other creature's hand, but at God's only. And as none giveth God the strength able to help, but is of itself in God and with God: so is there none that can give God a will to help, but he of himself is inclined to have mercy upon the afflicted; and his mercy is most prone and ready to help the poor and miserable.

Hereof learneth the afflicted Christian, that none inclineth God to be merciful, but his own gentle and pitiful nature. So that the sinner may boldly in Christ resort unto him, first, because he is mercy itself; and not go astray to seek first mercy at dead saints' hands, and by their means at last find God merciful and ready to help him.

And when the afflicted perceiveth, by the word of God, that he commandeth him to call upon him, and upon none other; he may take a courage and audacity to be bold to come unto him, be his sins never so many, horrible, or filthy; yea, if in number they exceeded the gravel of the sea, yet be they fewer always than his mercy: if they be as red as scarlet, yet shall they be made as white as snow. The Book of Wisdom saith even so. Although we have sinned, Lord, we be thine, knowing thy greatness. (Isaiah, i. Wisd. xv.)

And where these doctrines be grounded, see what followeth. In all the depth of anguish and sorrow, this followeth (as this Psalm saith): "Of him cometh my salvation. He is my strength, my salvation, and my defence," &c. The same may we see also in the dialogue between the Christian soul, or Christ's church, and Christ, in the book of Solomon's Ballads: were she never so black, and

burned with the sun, were she never so troubled with the vanities of the world, she cried out and said boldly unto Christ, "Draw me; we will run after thee." (Sol. Song, i.) And although the poor wretched soul be environed and compassed about with sin, troubles, and adversities, as the fair lily is hedged about with thorns; yet she trusteth in her husband, that he will help her. And indeed most comfortably her spouse Christ comforteth her with these marvellous words: "Arise, haste thee, my spouse, my fair one, and come. Now winter is passed, the rain is gone and ceased."

That book of Solomon is to be read, to see how mercifully God comforteth a troubled and deformed soul by sin: and yet God layeth it not to the soul's charge, that hath Christ to her husband. Also there is to be seen that the soul is bold to seek and call for help of God her husband, and goeth to no strange god for aid or succour, although she be burned with the sun, and a miserable sinner.

The like is to be seen in the prodigal son: although he was never so beggarly, miserable, sinful, wretched, and unkind to his father; yet he said, Even as I am with my miseries, I will go to my father, and tell him, that I have offended against him and against Heaven. The father, when he saw him, spat not at him, reviled him not, asked no accounts of the goods he had viciously spent, laid not to his charge his filthy conversation with whores and harlots; neither did he cast into his teeth how he had dishonoured him and his family: but when he saw him afar off, he was moved with compassion towards him, ran to meet him, took him about the neck, and kissed him. The son confessed his fault: and the father minding more the comfort of his lowly and beggarly son, than the repetition of his transgressions, commanded his servants speedily to fetch

him robes and to clothe him, gave him a ring upon his finger, and shoes to his feet, killed his fat calf, and made merry and rejoiced with his lost son, that he was found again. (Luke, xv.) Here is the state and condition of a soul that waiteth (as Asaph saith) for a time upon the Lord in trouble and heaviness, marvellously set forth.

See this wretched man, spoiled of all his goods; destitute of all friends, shut out of all honest company, of a gentleman become a swineherd, of one that had once men to wait upon him, become now a waiter upon pigs: once he gave others meat, and now all men refuse to feed him: erst a man that scarce delicate dishes could content his appetite, now his stomach irketh till it be filled with swine's food: yet moreover than that, he saw nothing behind him, nor before him, but misery and wretchedness. Behind him he left all his goods spent riotously, his estimation, parentage, such friends as he had: when money was plenty, lost; and also (as far as reason could see) his father's utter displeasure, and the reproach and ignominy of his alliance and kinsfolk, purchased for ever. Before him he saw hunger and scarcity, a sort of filthy swine, and the beat meat, draff and chaff for the sustenance and maintenance of his piggish life, in case he might have been so maintained: yet in the midst of these sorrows, attending in his spirit upon the mercy of his father, marvellously in the filth of a pig's sty, and in the pains and anguish of misery, hark what a wonderful doctrine he bloweth out: "Oh! what abundance of bread is there in my father's house, and I starve here for hunger! I will arise, and get me to him, and confess my fault," &c. He saith not, Oh! what abundance of bread have my brother and my kinsfolk: but, "What abundance of bread is there in my father's house!" He said not, I will

make my complaint to my brother ; but said, " To my father."

Whereof is learned, that all penitent Christian sinners do know, that the heavenly Father hath the bread of mercy, to satisfy their hungry desire ; and that he is to be resorted unto in such sinful and troublesome state, and not any other in heaven, but he alone through Jesus Christ, who was killed to redeem and save the penitent faithful sinners of the world.

See now how this prodigal and outrageous son knew why he should seek help of his father, in the time of his vile misery and wretchedness.

First, he knew his father's power, and therefore said : " Oh ! how great plenty of bread is there in my father's house !" believing that his father was able to give him meat sufficient. Next he was assured that his father was merciful, and would give him such things as he lacked ; and being thus persuaded, boldly he returned unto his father, and to him he uttered all his grief ; who was a great deal more prest and ready to help, than his son was ready to ask help.

Of the same mind was the woman of Canaan : for although she found little comfort at the first, yet she argued so from the nature of man to the nature of Christ, that Christ cried out upon her, and said, " O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou desirest." For when she said, the dogs did eat of the crumbs that fell from their master's table, she knew that she herself, and all men in respect of God, were no more, nor yet so much as dogs in the respect of man. And when she perceived that man could be contented to spare his crumbs to the dogs, she knew right well, that man was not so merciful and liberal unto dogs as God unto sinners. Wherefore she stood still with Christ

constantly, and left not calling, until Christ gave her to wit that she was indeed a very well persuaded woman, both of his power able to help and of his good will ready to help. For indeed, although she was a Canaanite, she knew, that if a man shut not out dogs from his table, Christ would not shut from his mercy a sinful Canaanite.

The same persuasion made Mary Magdalen creep under the board to his feet with tears; there to receive and eat of his mercy, to quench the hunger and smart of her sins.

These examples do declare, why the troubled may put their trust in God: because he is omnipotent, and can do all things; and he is merciful, and will help all penitent and faithful sinners. And so said this Prophet Asaph, "Of him cometh my salvation." And he sheweth the cause why: "For he is my rock, my salvation, and my defence."

These three words declare marvellously, the nature of God, that alone helpeth; and also the faith of him that calleth for help.

As for God, whom the Prophet calleth first his "Rock:" by this word, he openeth marvellously, how strong, firm, and sure, and how invincible he is against all troubles, adversities, and tempests, as well of the body as of the soul. In St. Matthew (chap. vii.), the man that buildeth his house upon the rock or stone, is called wise; and the cause is, that what winds soever blow, and what tempests soever arise, they cannot cast down the house, nor overthrow the building; for it is grounded upon the stone. The stone is God and his word, the builder is the Christian man, and the building is the religion that he hath learned of God by his word. And although we see God, our rock and sure stone, is not assaulted with stormy and tempestuous showers and rain; yet the builder and the building, that is to

say, the Christian man and his religion, be blown at, and such showers of trouble fall upon them, that, were not the rock firm and sure, all the building and the builder also (for man's part) would surely fall and come to utter ruin.

The experience of the same winds and floods, we may see in the Acts of the Apostles. For when Peter and the rest builded the house of God, that is to say, taught men their salvation by the merits and passion of Christ, there arose such winds and floods, that the builders were put into prison, and the building in great danger. (Acts, v.) When St. Stephen builded the congregation with God's word in Christ, while he was building, such winds and floods of malice assaulted him, that his brains were knocked out. (Acts, vii.) When Ananias and the rest planted and builded the house of God, that is to say, converted the infidels unto the faith of Christ at Damascus, there arose such winds and tempests at Jerusalem, that Saul came from thence towards Damascus, with commission from the high priests, to kill the builders, and to overthrow all they had builded. (Acts, ix.) Let us leave off the examples of holy men, and see what happened to the head and chief Captain of all saints and good builders, our Saviour Jesus Christ. When he called the world from ignorance to knowledge, from death to life, and from damnation to salvation, there arose such winds and storms, that, had he not been the rock itself of strength and invincible power, he had been overthrown clean, and his buildings turned upside down. For before he was of age to be born, the devil went about to slander him as a bastard; and would have persuaded the same to the godly man Joseph, spoused in marriage to the blessed Virgin Mary. (Matt. iii.) He was no sooner born into the world, but straightway Herod's sword was whet and bent to kill him. Within a little while after the devil stirred up

his own kinsfolk and countrymen, to cast him down from a hill-top, and to break his neck, and at length killed him indeed. But what was the outgoing of this builder? forsooth, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (Luke, iv.) And what was the assurance of his building? that is to say, in what surety stood his disciples and followers in the midst of these winds and great storms? Doubtless, Christ commended them to the custody and protection of his heavenly Father, the rock and sure stone of all salvation (Luke, xxiii.): from whom winds, floods, temptations, persecutions, death, sin, nor the devil himself, with all his company of wicked spirits, be able to remove the simplest of all Christ's flock. (John, xvii. Matt. vi.) In the Revelations of St. John (chap. xii.) there is a marvellous doctrine, what winds and floods shall blow and overflow this rock in the building, and builders, for the time of this life. There is a woman that had brought forth a man child; and by and by there was a foul great red dragon with seven heads and seven horns, that would have devoured this child, before he had come to his inheritance and kingdom appointed unto him. And when he saw he could not prevail against the child, he cast out of his mouth water, as it had been a great stream, after the mother: but there were given her wings to escape. For the rock that she was builded upon, was sure: that whatsoever winds or waters (that is to say, what troubles soever) should happen, nothing could overthrow her. And so saith Asaph here; "God being my rock and sure fortress, my soul nor my body shall never be confounded." As he declareth more openly by the two words that follow: "He is my strength and my salvation also," saith the Prophet. As though he had said, I do not only know God to be sure, strong, and invincible: but also I know this his might, strength,

and sureness, is my wealth and my salvation. For many men know, that God is the rock and strength of all powers, but none doth know that his power and strength is salvation for himself, but such as be God's indeed.

Therefore seeing this faith that believeth God, particularly to save a private person, is only God's gift, and cometh not of man; let us pray, that when we see how God hath been the rock of salvation to others, he will be so unto us likewise. For it is a singular gift of God, to say boldly, steadfastly, and merrily from the bottom of the heart unto him: "Thou, Lord, art my rock, my salvation, and my comfort." And he that feeleth in himself for himself, God to be his salvation, hath such a treasure, that all treasures besides it, are nothing to be esteemed; and he will not pass of goods, lands, nor life, for this faith's sake.

But faith, as long as it cometh no nearer the heart than the ear, the lips, the teeth, or the tongue, it is but an easy matter to believe. As we see these rumblers up of the Psalms, and the rest of God's word at this time in the church, where they that say them, nor they that hear them, understand any thing at all, or be any deal the more edified for that which is done or said in the church. And I am assured, if the priests felt in their hearts the vengeance of God to come, for this abusing the word of God, and the people knew what an incomparable treasure they have lost, by the taking away of the word of God in the vulgar tongue, the priest would weep water of his eyes as often as he said his service, and the people would sigh full heavily as oft as they heard it, and understood not what it meant. Wherefore let every man pray to God, that he may know him as the Prophet Asaph doth, that he is the rock and salvation to him that so calleth upon him.

The third word is "Defence;" by the which the Prophet noteth two marvellous doctrines: the one touching God, and the other touching man. The thing touching God is this: look, as in himself God is omnipotent, so is he of power both in body and soul, to do all things for his creatures in general. And as generally he can do all things for his creatures, so particularly he is salvation to all that by faith believe in him. And as he is also salvation, particularly to such as believe in him; even so particularly is he a defence, buckler, and protection of such as shall be saved: that neither sin, the devil, or any troubles of the body, nor troubles, doubtfulness, anguish, perplexity, or heaviness of mind, shall hurt or damn them. The doctrine touching man by this word, "Defence," is this: look, as the faithful man hath in himself this general knowledge with all men, that God is almighty to do all things, as he list, with his creatures generally; so particularly he believeth, that he is able, and will save, such as particularly believe their salvation in him. And as the faithful particularly believeth his salvation to be only in God; so doth he also believe and challenge particularly with the rest of his brethren in Christ, maintenance, perfection, and defence from all misadventures, jeopardies, and dangers, that may happen in this life, before he come to everlasting joys. God, therefore, give us grace with the Prophet Asaph to say faithfully unto him, "Thou art my strength, my salvation, and my defence." Then, doubtless, we shall be assured of that which followeth, "So shall I not greatly fall."

Of these words, "So shall I not greatly fall," we also are taught and instructed very necessary lessons and doctrines. First, what difference there is between the defence of God towards his people in this life, and in the life to come.

As touching the defence of God towards his people in this life, it is marvellously set forth by Christ in his prayer a little before his death : where he prayed unto his Father not to take his Apostles out of this world, but to preserve them in this world from sin. (John, xvii.) So that he would his friends, with God's defence, should abide in this world ; and what they should have in the world, for all God's defence, Christ told them : " In the world (saith he) ye shall suffer affliction ; and ye shall weep, and the world shall laugh." (John, xvi.) Again he said unto them, that he sent them forth as sheep amongst wolves. (Matt. x.) Whereby we may see, that God's favour and God's defence save not his very elect in this life from troubles and afflictions : for St. Paul saith, " As many as will live godly, shall suffer persecution." Therefore the Holy Ghost placeth the faithful congregation, the spouse of Christ (whom God loveth and defendeth), among thorns and brambles (Sol. Song, ii.) : and sometimes likeneth the faithful congregation unto a ship, tossed upon the sea with danger of drowning (Matt. xiii.) : sometimes unto a house, whereupon blow all winds and weather (Matt. vii.) : and sometimes to a woman travailing with child, before whom standeth a foul dragon, ready to devour both child and mother (Rev. xii.). So that by this Prophet Asaph's words, that saith, " he shall not greatly fall," and by these other places, we learn, that in this life, such as God loveth and defendeth from the eternal fire of hell, be (notwithstanding for this life) under great crosses and wonderful troubles : yet Christ willeth us to be of good comfort, for he hath overcome the world, (John, xvii.) And the Prophet saith, " God is my rock and my salvation : I shall not greatly fall." And to consider the truth, such as God most strongly de-

fendeth, and best loveth in this world, suffer many times greatest troubles. (Proverbs, iii. Heb. xii. Rev. iii.) Yea, and God beginneth with his friends sometimes first, and most sharply, as Peter saith. (1 Peter, iv.) And St. Paul saith, "We be predestinate to be made like unto Christ in troubles, while we be in this troublesome world." (Rom. viii.) But the defence of God and his love in the world to come is void from all bitterness and pain, and from all troubles and adversities, as it is most comfortably and joyfully written in the Ballads of Solomon (ch ii.), where (for a time) the Lord defended his spouse that stood in the midst of sharp and pricking briars and thorns: at length he calleth her to perpetual rest and consolation, assuring her that the winter is gone, and the tempestuous showers past; the sweet flowers do appear, and the pleasant voice of the turtle is heard: meaning, that such as be loved and kept by God in the world of bliss to come, be sequestered and departed from all troubles and adversities.

The like may you see in the Revelations of St. John, wherein he mystically, to set forth the pleasantness and unspeakable joys of heaven, saith, "It is paved with precious stones, and the gates thereof be also of pearls." And moreover, "There is a light more light than the sun or moon, for the clarity of God lighteneth it, and the brightness is the Lamb of God. There shall the elect dwell for ever, and the gates shall never be shut, neither shall there be any night there to trouble it." (Rev. xxi.)

The same is to be seen also in Isaiah the Prophet, how in that life God's defence is in such as be saved, without all kinds of troubles and adversities. (Chap. lvi.)

Now here is to be noted, that as God's favour and defence in the world to come, in such as be

saved, is void of all troubles and adversities ; even so God's favour and his defence in this world, in such as shall be saved, is joined and annexed with troubles and adversities. Let us therefore be content with trouble and persecution in his favour here in this life, or else doubtless we shall never have his favour and defence in the life to come, in joy and everlasting consolation.

There is yet another learning in these words, "I shall not greatly fall:" that is, that the children of God shall not perish for any kind of trouble, and yet in this world they can lack no kind of affliction. All shall they suffer ; and yet at length overcome all, as this Prophet Asaph did : he was troubled, but yet not overcome ; he fell, but not so far that he arose not again ; and he was so troubled with the cross that God sent him, that he could speak nothing for the time ; yet at length he said, God was his sure rock and his salvation. Thus God tempteth his, but desperation he leaveth to his enemies. God suffereth his to feel in this world the punishment of sin, but he reserveth the pain thereof in the world to come to his enemies, and to the reprobates. He maketh his to be sorry for sin in this world ; but such as be not his, he suffereth to be careless and painless of sin in this life, that their damnation may be the more dolorous in the world to come : therefore blessed be such as fall and fear, as the Prophet Asaph saith, but not too far, unto all wickedness and wantonness of life,

THE THIRD PART.

Ver. 3. How long will ye imagine mischief against a man ? Ye shall be slain all the sort of you : yes, as a tottering wall shall ye be, and like a broken hedge.

Ver. 4. *Their device is only how to put him out, whom God will exalt; their delight is in lies; they give good words with their mouth, but curse with their hearts.*

The third part sheweth, how the persecutors of the innocent shall suddenly perish.

By the similitude and metaphor of a tottering or quivering wall, the Prophet declareth, how lightly and suddenly the Lord will destroy the persecutors of his people: for as the wall that is tottering and quivering with every wind and weather, is easily and suddenly overthrown; even so be the wicked by tyrannical persecutors suddenly destroyed; yea, when they be in their own conceits most strong and valiant. As it may be seen by the mighty host of Sennacherib and Benhadad, the army of king Pharaoh and such other, that persecuted the people of God (1 Kings, xx. 2 Kings, viii. xviii. xix. Exod. xiv.), verily supposing their strength to have been able utterly to have oppressed God's people, whom they hated. The like is to be seen where Esther and Judith, two weak and poor women, were instruments to overturn and destroy the wicked Haman and proud Holofernes. (Esther, vii. Judith, xiii.) So by this we learn, that the strength and persecutions of the wicked be not permanent nor strong, but transitory and feeble, destroyed and vanquished with the presence of God's favour towards his, as often as it pleaseth him to punish the malice and mischief of the wicked.

But there is one learning particularly to be noted in this similitude of a trembling or tottering wall, wherewithal the Prophet setteth forth the fall and confusion of the wicked, which is this; that when the wicked persecuteth the godly, and that the least resistance of the world is stirred up by God against

them, the Lord that stirreth up the plague to punish them, striketh also their hearts with such trembling and fear, that one man in a good cause shall be able to withstand ten such wicked persecutors, whose conscience God hath so feared, that they are not able to bear the countenance of man; no, not able to overcome the terror of their own spirit, which beareth them record, that as they in time past have fought against God and his cause, so now God justly fighteth against them, both with the fear of hell fire towards their souls, and with outward adversity towards their bodies. So God said he would send such trembling and fear into such as neither loved nor kept his laws, as it is written by the holy Prophet Moses. (Deut. xxviii.) The example whereof ye may read also in Daniel the Prophet (chap. v.), that the Emperor of the Chaldees, when he was in the midst of his strength, mirth, banquets, and jollity, saw no more but a poor little hand write in the wall of his palace, that never spoke a word, shewed no terrible sight of men of war, nor gave any blow in his palace; yet fell the Emperor into such a trembling and fear at the sight thereof, that all his limbs (in manner) stood him in no stead.

Christ never gave blow, but modestly asked his murderers whom they sought for; and yet fell they flat and prostrate to the ground (John, xviii.): so that the wicked persecutors of the godly be aptly and properly likened and compared to a tottering and trembling wall. For as soon as ever the blasts of God's ire and judgment be moved and kindled against them, they be so quivering and comfortless, that they would take them to be most their friends that soonest would dispatch them out of the world; as Christ said aptly of them, they should pray the mountains to fall upon them. (Luke, xxiii.) As long as God feigneth himself asleep, and suffereth the blessed to fall into the hands

of the wicked to be crucified and slain as they please, they be more strong and more cruel than lions ; but when God ariseth, and taketh the defence of his poor people, then they be more fearful than the hart or trembling hare : as we see when silly harmless Jacob passed homeward into his country from Mesopotamia, such as he never gave blow nor spake foul word unto, trembled at his coming, as though he had been in battle with thousands of soldiers. (Gen. xliii.) The like may we see by the brothers of Joseph, when he spake most gently unto them, yea and told them that he was their brother, there was such a terror and fear strake their consciences for persecuting of him, that they could make no word of answer. When the children of Israel should come into the land of Canaan, the Lord said he would send before them his fear, to amaze and astonish the people of the country, that their strength should do them no harm. (Exod. xxiii.)

The fury of the wicked may seem in his own eyes to be stable, firm, and constant, but indeed there is nothing more trembling nor tottering, as we may see at this present day. Such as persecute the lively and silly flock of Christ, and tyrannously hold the neck of the godly under the yoke of idolatry, they have no ground, no certainty, nor any assurance more than flesh and blood that favour them, by whose favour they oppress the truth, and persecute the lovers of it : so that in case flesh and blood should fail them, then would they be in such trembling and quivering, that they would do whatsoever they were commanded to do, to be delivered from fear and terror.

As we may mark and see in the Bishop of Winchester, Gardiner, and also Bonner, the Bishop of London, when King Henry the Eighth suspected them both to be favourers of the Pope: (the capital

enemy of Christ and his church), Winchester fell into such a trembling and fear, that with all haste he wrote his purgation in a book named, *True Obedience*; and Bonner set an epistle before it, both they crying out against the Pope, as against a tyrant and false usurper of authority in this realm (although they thought nothing less). Thus we may see how inconstant, trembling, and quaking these tottering wicked persecutors of God's word be. I could declare more of their religion to be of the same conditions; but because these two, and Tunstall, the Bishop of Durham, be known openly to the world by their books to be such, I speak only of them.

When the Prophet hath declared that the persecutors of the godly shall suddenly perish, he telleth the cause why they shall perish: "Because they devise how to put him down (saith he), whom God will exalt." And after that the Prophet hath shewed that the cause of this fall and punishment is their conspiracy against God's elect, he setteth forth by what means the wicked use to depose, persecute, and tumble down the people of God: "By lies (saith the Prophet), and by imagining of falsehood and untruth." And when he hath declared that the wicked do purpose to bring their case and matter against the godly with lies, he sheweth after what sort and fashion the lies by wicked men be used: "to bring mischief to purpose." This is the letter of the Psalm concerning the third part of it. Now there is in every of these sentences profit to be gathered by the reader or hearer of it.

First is to be noted the conspiracy and treason of the wicked against God. If it please the Lord to favour and advance one, the nature of the wicked is, as much to deface what God would have honoured, as may be. As God bare favour, and advanced Abel; Cain wrought treason, and killed his

brother, for the love that God did bear him. (Gen. iv.) The Lord appointed Samuel to rule; the wicked misliked that, which God best approved. (1 Sam. viii. xviii. 1 Kings, xv.) God would exalt David; Saul, Absalom, and Achitophel, would prefer themselves. Again the Lord appointed Noah to teach the people to beware of the universal flood; the people preferred liars, unto whom God never gave his holy Spirit. (Gen. vi. vii.) God elected Jeremiah the true Prophet; the people advanced Passur the false prophet. (Jeremiah, xx.) The Lord exalted his dear Son, and willed the world to learn of him; the people preferred the Pharisees, and desired the judge to hang Christ. (Matt. iii. xvii. xxviii.) God commanded his word only to be taught; but the world plucketh it so down, that either they clean refuse the word, or else they will have it none otherwise than it is authorized and made true by man. (John, v.) God saith, that which is wisdom before the world, is foolishness before him. (1 Cor. i.) The world recompenseth most arrogantly God with the like, and accounteth all his wisdom and learning foolishness in respect of worldly wisdom, counsel, and religion. But what saith the Prophet Asaph shall become of these Nimrods and controllers of God? "They shall (saith he) quickly fall, and be destroyed as a tottering wall."

Here we see how controlling and amending of God's works at length speedeth, and what is the end of these persecuting giants of God's afflicted. They fight, they fare foul, they move heaven and earth to alter the purpose and mind of God; but "He that sitteth in heaven laugheth them to scorn." (Psalm ii.) And they themselves that thus wickedly use Christ and his members, fall down and come to nought, as old, rotten, and dusty walls.

And in the other part, that these shameless tyrants

conspire thus against Christ and his people, by lies and falsehood, is declared the filthiness of their conscience, that be so far past shame and honesty, that they care not (so they may obtain their wicked purpose) how craftily or falsely they lie or calumniate any sayings or doings of God or man, as the devil, their father, when God had exalted man into paradise, he wished him out of it, and began to work man's destruction with calumniating and false lying upon God's own word. (Gen. iii.) When God had set up David to reign, Absalom, his own son, thinking the better to pull his father down, lied falsely upon him to the people, and said, that there was no judge appointed in Israel to hear causes and to end them between man and man. (1 Kings, xv.) So slandered he his father, a man of good justice, and advanced himself, that never knew what justice meant. The good Prophet Elias likewise, whom God appointed to warn the people to beware of sin: King Ahab, to disgrace him, lied falsely upon him, and said that he was the trouble of the commonwealth. (1 Kings, xviii.) So of Christ, whom God had elected to save the world from death and damnation, the wicked sort of the world said, "He hath saved others, but he cannot save himself." (Matt. xxvii.) Again, God sent him to be amongst the troubled to comfort them; but such as wanted consolation, when they saw him, prayed him to depart out of their country, because with his presence they lost their swine. (Matt. viii. Mark, v. Luke, viii.) God said that Paul was the chosen vessel, to bear the name of him through all the gentiles. Tertullus and the other Jews said, he was one that molested all the world. (Acts, xxiv.) Even so at this time, there is neither honest nor virtuous man, that God exalteth to speak the truth, but the wicked saith, he is an heretic, a schismatic, and a traitor: but seeing it is none other than always

bath been accustomed, falsely to be laid to such as God loveth, it must be borne patiently.

But now the Prophet sheweth, how these liars and envious persecutors use their lies : “ They give fair words with their mouth (saith the Prophet), but they curse with their heart.” By these words we may learn, that there are three manner of ways that lies do harm : the one, when they be openly and plainly used ; the other, when falsehood outwardly is cloaked with pretended truth ; and the third, when they be dissembled outwardly, and yet in the heart they lie hid, tarrying for a time when they may be put abroad, to do mischief, and to work the destruction of the godly. But forasmuch as the devil, the father of all lies (John, viii.), knoweth that such as he inspireth with lies, cannot do harm with his lies, except they be used as the persons be qualified, amongst whom the lies must be sown ; he teacheth his disciples to use them as opportunity and occasion shall serve.

Manifest and uncovered lies he causeth to be used, amongst such as do not know nor love the truth : for those lies shall stablish and confirm the wicked in their error and wickedness. As for example : Absalom and Achitophel told the people [as many lies (in manner) as they did words against King David (1 Sam. xv.) ; and when they were by Absalom’s fair words alienated from King David, and bent unto his son, because he promised to use justice to every man, and lawful favour ; after Absalom came to Hebron, and had of his side Achitophel, his father’s chief counsellor, he lied openly, and the people more and more were stablished in error and treason. The like is to be seen in the book of the Numbers (chap. xiv.), that when such returned out of the land of Canaan, as were sent to view the goodness and strength of the country, ten of the twelve spies

brought the people into such a terror and fear, that they thought it impossible to recover the land. Thus the people being in an error, manifest lies against God, Moses, Joshua, and Caleb, might be used well enough and prevail.

In matters of religion is the same amongst such as be deceived and in error; manifest lies do take place, and do as much harm, as the devil requireth to be wrought by them. As amongst the Chaldees, such as most commended the idol of fire, were most esteemed. (Gen. xi.) Amongst the Egyptians, such as most blasphemously could speak in the defence of witchcraft and sorcery, were taken for the best men. (Exod. vi. vii. viii.) Such as could best defend the honour of Baal, amongst the idolatrous Jews, had most reverence and honour. (1 Kings, xvii. xviii.) Amongst the Pharisees, he that could most speak for the maintenance of men's traditions, was taken for the worthiest man. (Matt. xv.) And now amongst the Papists, he that can best defend papistical idolatry and superstition, is highest preferred. But (as I said) this use of lies and falsehood takes place in none but in such as the devil (the god of this world) will not suffer to have the word of truth known. (2 Cor. iv.) And this use of lies and falsehood doth not train men unto error and heresy; but establisheth men in them, that do not know the truth.

There is another sort of people, which be the faithful, at whom the devil hath indignation, and laboureth with all diligence to deceive; against whom the use of manifest lies (he knoweth) cannot prevail: for such as do know and love the truth, do abhor falsehood. Wherefore, if the devil prevail against them, it is by another use of lies, than he used to the other sort of the world.

This use of lies is of two sorts; as we see by the word of God. The one is to make an evil thing to appear good, under the pretence of good; and a false

thing to appear true, under the pretence of truth. As we may see how the devil, under the pretence of good and profit unto Eve, made her eat of the apple which was forbidden. (Gen. iii.) Cain, under the pretence of friendship, brought Abel into the field, and killed him. (Gen. iv.) Saul, under the pretence of amity, had David to feast, and so meant to have slain him. (1 Sam. xvii.) Absalom, under the colour of justice and love to the commonwealth, sought his father's death, and made all his subjects traitors. (1 Kings, xv.); with many more such examples in the word of God, whereby is declared, that the devil, by his disciples, useth lies many ways: sometimes to establish men in error, that be in error already: sometimes to deceive such as be in the truth; but then manifest lies be not used, but rather lies conveyed, covered, and cloaked with the mantle of truth and verity: as we may see by the examples before specified: howbeit, many times this use of lies, howsoever it pretendeth truth, cannot deceive men. Then, rather than the devil will miss of his purpose, he teacheth another use of lies, which is more dangerous and painful to the godly, than any yet before mentioned of: of the which use the Prophet Asaph speaketh in this place, saying, "They speak fair with their tongues, but think evil in their hearts."

This is a perilous kind and use of lies; for it doth one of these two great mischiefs, or else both of them; that is to say, either at length it overcometh the truth, or else mortally persecuteth the truth that will not be overcome; as we may see by Esau. He used a great while fair speech and gentle manners with Jacob his brother; but in his heart he said, "If my father die, I will kill my brother." (Gen. xxvii.) Again, Absalom spake fair to his father, and asked him leave to go to Hebron, to pay there the

sacrifice that he promised (whilst he was in Gessur of Syria) unto God; but in his heart, he went thither to raise King David his father's subjects against him. (1 Kings, xv.) Certain came to Christ, and said, "Master, we know that thou art true, and that thou teachest the ways of God in truth" (Matt. xxii.); yet in their hearts, they came to trip him in a case of treason if they could.

This use of lies is very dangerous; for it lieth in the heart hid secretly, expecting and looking for time convenient, when and how it may break forth to serve the turn: yet is the devil the father of lies, and the temple of the devil the wicked man's and woman's hearts, wherein they lie ashamed or afraid to utter them; but hold outwardly with the truth, which inwardly they mortally hate, until they may take occasion to do outwardly as they would. And we see it in Cain, Esau, Absalom, the Pharisees, and others. Yea, our own age hath too good experience of this use of lies: for, how many within this twelve-month spake fair of God and his word, and shewed themselves outwardly as friendly as could be unto them? But what their conscience and hearts were inwardly, now it appeareth. Doubtless, that they hated deadly in their spirits, that they most extolled with their mouths; for now they be gone from the truth outwardly, which inwardly they never loved. And by the use of their lies, they train as many as they may, to be partakers of their evils; and such as they cannot, by the use of lies, draw unto their sect, by violence and tyranny they persecute and compel with extreme punishment and hatred, in lands, goods, and body.

Thus may we see by this Prophet Asaph, which way the wicked persecuted the godly, and molested the weak members of Christ, that wished all men good, and no men harm, even with lies and false-

hood, and used many crafty and subtle ways. Whereof we be not instructed by the Prophet only to know this poison of the devil concerning lies, and the divers and manifold use and practice of them; but also, that Christians be most in danger of them, yet must be contented for Christ's sake to bear them, and circumspectly to beware they be not deceived by them.

THE FOURTH PART.

Ver. 5. Nevertheless, my soul, wait thou still upon God; for my help is in him.

Ver. 6. He truly is my strength and my salvation; he is my defence, so that I shall not fall.

Ver. 7. In God is my health and my glory, the rock of might; and in God is my trust.

Ver. 8. Oh! put your trust in him always, ye people; pour out your hearts before him: for God is our hope. Selah.

The fourth part repeateth more at large, the declaration of the first and the second part.

The fifth and sixth verses be word for word, as the first and the second were: only there is left out in these two verses, this word "greatly:" for before he said, he should not (greatly) fall. The which word may be taken two ways very comfortable, of the reader and hearer, if it be well marked and believed.

The first way is, that the Prophet meaneth not that the people of God shall not fall, for that is against the Scripture, for "The just man falleth seven times in the day." (Prov. xxiv.) Again, "If we say we have no sin in us, we deceive ourselves; and the truth is not in us." (1 John, i.) Now, whereas sin inseparably dwelleth (as it doth) in all men whilst they live upon the earth, there be faults, and

falls before God of the man's part, in whom this sin dwelleth; yet God of his mercy, for the blood and death of Christ, doth not account these inseparable sins to be falls; but loveth the person, preserveth him, and will not impute nor lay any of those falls or faults unto his charge, but in Christ esteem him justified and clean, as though he were of himself so indeed. (Rom. viii.) And thus the Prophet saith, that of God's part, and by our acceptation into his favour, through Christ, the faithful falleth not: that is to say, his sin is not accounted damnable, nor laid to his charge, for Christ's sake: as St. Paul writeth to the Romans. (Chap. viii.)

Another way it may be taken: that a Christian hath testimony in his spirit by the Spirit of God, that he is so elected, chosen, and ordained of God to eternal salvation; that whatsoever the world, the flesh, the devil, or sin shall do, yet standeth he assured of God's election, grace, strength, and fidelity, that he shall never fall to damnation, but arise again, and be called from his falls, whatsoever they be. And yet this most sure and comfortable knowledge will not give him license nor liberty to sin, but rather keep him in a fear and love of the strong and mighty God, in whose hands he is, and kept from the great fall of eternal damnation, from the which he was delivered from the beginning with God. So that ye may learn of this place, what perseverance is, in the meditation and contemplation of God's most holy word and promises.

At first they seem unto the flesh things impossible, as we may see by Nicodemus, who was as ignorant as could be at the beginning, when he came first to school to Christ. (John, iii.) But when a man hath been exercised awhile in it, he feeleth more sweetness in the promises of God; as we see by this Prophet. For after he had borne the cross

of affliction a little while, and learned the nature of God, how merciful he is to sinners ; he said, “ Although I fall, yet it shall not be greatly.” But when he had tarried in the school of Christ, and learned indeed what he was, and how that he was able to perform his mercy, he said plainly, whatsoever sin the devil, the world, the flesh, hell, heaven, or the earth would say against him, he should not fall. These two interpretations are to be noted ; for, whichsoever we use, we may find comfort and unspeakable consolation.

Now, when he hath declared that he shall not fall into God’s eternal ire and displeasure, he sheweth how this certainty of eternal salvation came unto him ; and why God so mercifully and strongly hath warded and fenced him against all temptations and perils of damnation.

It is (saith he) because God is his health ; that is to say, one that hath not only taken him from the sickness and danger of sin, the tyranny of the devil, and damnation of the law ; but also preserveth him in the same state, that he fall not again into the sickness and peril that he was delivered from. Whereof we learn, that it is not man’s labours, nor man’s works, that help a sinner, and save a damnable soul ; but it is the free work and undeserved mercy of Almighty God. Wherefore we be taught that “ there is no health, but in God alone.”

Then saith the Prophet also, that in God is his glory. Of the which word he noteth two things ; the one touching God alone, and the other touching God and himself.

The glory that toucheth God alone is, that this troubled Prophet pondered, in the heaviness and anguish of his mind, the number and strength of his enemies, the devil, the flesh, sin, the world, and the bitter accusation of God’s laws, that truly

accused and painfully grieved his conscience for sin. Of the other side, in faith he considered how the Scripture declared that God was merciful, even unto the greatest sinners of the world. And he learned also by the word of God, that God had made promise unto sinners to be merciful. He considered further, that God had many times used and practised his mercy towards sinners. And he found likewise by the Scripture, that God, to perform his mercy, would not spare his own dearly beloved Son, to redeem man from his sin with his own precious blood and painful death.

Thus weighing the strength of the devil and sin in the one part to damn, and the strength of God's mercy in Christ Jesus on the other part to save; and perceiving the riches, abundance, and strength of God's mercy to be more available to save, than all the power and strength of the devil and sin to damn (for the great victory that God taketh over such strong enemies); the Prophet triumpheth in the glory of God joyfully and thankfully; extolling him for his mercy and power, that hath broken the serpent's head, and spoiled him of his prisoners. So we use to do, when any man by valiantness defendeth us from our enemies: we extol and magnify him for his victory and conquest.

: This glory gave the Prophet Asaph in this Psalm to God, when by faith he saw God conquering of hell, sin, the devil, the accusation of the law, desperation, the flesh, and the world. And the same glory giveth every faithful creature unto God, at the end of the Lord's Prayer, when he saith: "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." (Matt. vi.) By the which words we know, that howsoever the devil and wicked people take upon them to usurp by violence, war, and tyranny, and live never so princely in pomp and

pride; they be but usurpers, if they come to it wrongfully, for the kingdom appertaineth unto God. And howsoever they extend their power, in God's sight they be no stronger than a bruised reed or broken staff; for the power is God's. And what glory soever they feign and flatter themselves to have, it is but withered hay and vile dust in the sight of God.

But now the Prophet, by the eye of faith, seeing this glorious triumph, strength, and power in God; saith, that in this glorious, almighty, and triumphant God is his glory; and desireth to have part of that victory, and of that marvellous majesty. And as the Psalm saith, he calleth and nameth the God of glory, his glory. O marvellous and unspeakable boldness and constancy of faith! A man nothing but sin by nature, in the sight of God nothing but earth and ashes, replenished with all misery and wretchedness, by nature corrupt, the very enemy of God, a vessel prepared unto all dishonour, ignominy, shame, and perdition, condemned through sin, and shamed before all creatures; and yet now, with all these dishonours, (by faith) saith the King of glory is his glory, and the conqueror of all dishonour is his shield and buckler.

Of the other part, who can think or speak any thing thankful to such a King of glory, and most mighty conqueror, that abhorreth not, of mercy, to be the honour and glory of so vile, sinful, and wretched a thing as man is? whose eyes abhor no filth of sin in penitent sinners, whose presence refuseth not the company of the sick and miserable, whose strength comforteth the weak, whose mercy rejoiceth the comfortless, whose life expelleth death, whose health banisheth sickness, whose love vanquisheth hatred, whose immortality giveth everlasting

life, and who crowneth us with endless pity and compassion in joys perpetual. (Psalm ciii.)

Thus the Prophet, after he had espied the Almighty God in himself gloriously to be void of all troubles, dolours, and other adversities, and that he had also conquered gloriously the captains of all adversities, hell, death, Satan, and sin; he challenged by faith, and craved by God's promise, to be partaker of God's glory in this point. And doubtless, he that can feel in his heart that God is his glory, he shall take no dishonour nor shame by all the works of the devil, sin, or the world. Therefore many times, in reading or thinking of the Psalms, or other parts of the holy Scripture, it is expedient to meditate and pray, that the word we speak or pray, maybe unto us as much salvation, comfort, and glory, as we perceive God hath appointed in it for us. And when we say with our mouth to God, "Thou art my salvation, my glory, my rock, and my trust;" let us cry, "Lord, increase our faith; help us for thy name sake constantly to believe thee, to be unto us indeed in spirit, as we speak of thee outwardly with our mouth." (Luke, xvii.) For in case the heart understand not, nor believe the word we speak with our mouth, we honour God in vain, as the Scripture saith. (Isaiah, xxix. Matt. xv.) Let us therefore pray, as St. Paul teacheth us, saying, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the mind also." (1 Cor. xiv.)

When the Prophet hath by faith assured himself of God's favour, he exhorteth all the Christian congregation to do the same, saying: "O put your trust in him always, ye people," &c.

Here the Prophet teacheth, what the minister of the church, bishop, and others should do, when they understand the Scripture, and learn by it, fear and faith, love and hope in God: they be

bound to teach the congregation the same Scriptures for her salvation. Whereby is condemned the use of the Scripture in an unknown tongue; which is directly against God's word. (1 Cor. xiv.) And here be kings and rulers also taught to see their subjects, tenants, and servants to understand the word of God; likewise the father and the mother, the master and the mistress, who be bound to know for their salvation the word of God, and to teach it unto others under their governance. Therefore, in the end of the verse is put *Selah*; as though he had said, Happy be those that put their trust in the Lord, and teach others to do the same: and cursed be those that trust not in the Lord, and teach others to do the like.

THE FIFTH PART.

Ver. 9. As for the children of men, they are but vain: the children of men are deceitful upon the weights; they are altogether lighter than vanity itself.

Ver. 10. Oh! trust not in wrong and robbery; give not yourselves to vanity: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

The fifth part sheweth, how man's power is not to be trusted unto.

The Prophet by no means would have men to put their trust in flesh and blood; in case they do, they must needs perish. For when miserable man shall trust in vain vanity, which is man; he can be no less than vanity itself, in whom he hath trusted. And this is one misery and wretchedness, a man to be deceived of help and succour, where he most trusted to have been holpen and succoured. Thus must it needs happen to them that trust in men: for men of most excellency and greatest authority, riches, and

power in the world, be but vanity : as the Prophet saith : “ Now as they be, so is their help. And as their help is, so is the comfort and consolation of such as seek help at their hands.” Those that be trusted unto, be but flesh and blood : the best of flesh and blood is but vanity : the consolation and help of vanity is misery and wretchedness ; wherefore the Prophet exhorteth all men to beware, they seek not aid and comfort of man, for he is but vain. The Israelites used for their help against their enemies, the Egyptians ; but the more flesh conspired together, the worse success had all the battles they fought. Now as we see, men that have their trust in men, suffer much trouble and misery in the world, because the help they trust in is of inferior strength and power to the troubles and adversities that they be cumbered withal ; so doth the word of God declare, that such men as trust in vanity, have not only worldly adversities against them, but also for their so doing (trusting in flesh), they be accursed of God, as the Scripture saith : “ Cursed be he that trusteth in man.” (Jeremiah, xvii.) So that we see marvellous and unspeakable harms come of the trust in man : first, miseries of the world ; and next, the enmity and curse of God : for he that putteth his trust in man, with the same one fact and doing, doth two horrible evils : the one, he deceiveth himself ; for the vanity that he trusteth in, cannot save him : and the other, he dishonoureth God, that only can save, in putting his trust in mortal man, that cannot save, and so maketh of man God, to God’s high displeasure and dishonour.

Every Christian man therefore should forsake flesh and blood, and trust in the Lord Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, as the Prophet Asaph did a little before, when he said, in God was his glory,

who could defend him from all hurts present, past, and to come, whatsoever they were.

The like may we see in St. Paul, that said : “ God forbid that I should glory in any thing, saving in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world ” (Gal. vi.) : that is, because I put all my trust of salvation (saith St. Paul) in Him that was crucified, the world taketh me for an heretic, and so persecuteth me ; but yet it overcometh me not, neither taketh it away my glory, my consolation, and my crown of eternal joys. For even as the world persecuteth me with fire, sword, and all other crucifyings ; so I crucify the world again, testifying by the word of God, that their living is nought, and their faith and trust worse. So that as they crucify me with worldly trouble, in like manner I crucify the world again with the word of God, and speak against it, bearing testimony that it is the enemy of God, and shall perish eternally : but this I do (saith St. Paul) “ because I glory in nothing, saving in Christ crucified.”

Thus doth the Prophet Asaph teach all men to put their trust in Christ, and not in sinful man ; which is not only vanity, but also, “ If vanity were laid in one balance, and man in the other, yet, of both, man were the more vanity. Therefore man is not to be trusted unto,” saith the Prophet.

And for a further declaration that man is more vain than vanity, he openly declareth in the process of his Psalm, that man is given, besides vanity, to wrong and robbery, which two evils do increase man’s misery. For man is not only born vain vanity, but also by process of time in wicked living addeth wrong and robbery unto vanity, and so maketh vanity more vain and damnable, than it was before.

Now this robbery and wrong is done two manner of ways—to God and to man. He that putteth his

trust of salvation in any other thing, saving in God, loseth not only his salvation, but also robbeth God of his glory, and doth God (as much as lieth in him) manifest wrong, as the wicked people amongst the Jews did, that said, as long as they honoured and trusted unto the queen of heaven, all things prospered with them; but when they hearkened to the true preachers of God's word, they said all things came into worse state, and that with scarcity and trouble they were overwhelmed. (Hosea, ii. Jeremiah, xliv.)

He that putteth also his trust and confidence in any learning or doctrine besides God's word, doth not only fall into error, and lose the truth; but also, as much as lieth in him, he robbeth God's book of his sufficient truth and verity, and ascribeth it to the books of men's decrees; which is as much wrong to God and his book, as may be thought or done. In the which robbery (or rather sacrilege) no man should put his trust, as the Prophet saith.

Another way wrongs be done unto man; when the rich and sturdy of the world, by abusing of friendship, oppress, rob, and spoil the poor; and by his thus doing, first he deceiveth himself; for evil-gotten goods cannot long prosper, neither can any family advanced by fraud, craft, or subtlety, long time endure. Then he deceiveth the simple and poor that trusteth upon the outward show of his port and estimation, which glittereth in the world as a vain-glorious and deceivable beauty and honour, and marketh neither how wickedly the glory of the robber and doer of wrong sprang up, nor how miserably God hath ordained it to fall again.

But seeing carnally, he seeth a vain man in vanity prosper for a time; he trusteth in this vanity, pampered up with robbery and wrong, until such time as vanity fadeth, and he much lamenteth that he put in

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vanity so much vain hope. But grant that honour and riches by God's gift and truth abound, yet were they not given for men to trust in, but for men to give God more thanks, and to help the poor with them from injuries of oppression, and need of hunger, thirst, and poverty. Therefore the Prophet saith : " Although riches do abound, yet men should not put their hearts upon them : " that is to say, men should not trust in them, nor keep them otherwise than their use or keeping should serve to the glory of God ; in abundance to be liberal, and in time of need to be careful not to keep them for a private commodity, but, as Joseph did say, to save the multitude from scarcity and penury. (Gen. xli.) Thus doth the Prophet exhort all men to beware they put not their trust in men ; for both they and all that they have of worldly things be transitory, vain, and inconstant.

THE SIXTH PART.

Ver. 11. *God spake once, and twice I have also heard the same, that power belongeth unto God :*

Ver. 12. *And that thou, Lord, art merciful ; for thou rewardest every man according to his work.*

The sixth part containeth how that God hath promised to help the afflicted, &c.

Job hath the same phrase and manner of speech : " The Lord spake once, and will not repeat the same again " (Job, xxiii.) : that is as much as to say, as that the word of God is so sure, that it cannot be made frustrate, nor changed by any means. So saith this Prophet Asaph, " God spake once," which standeth sure for ever, and cannot be altered.

This word of God hath relation to the verses before : wherein he opened the vanity of man or insufficiency to help himself or others in trouble, which cannot be changed, nor ever shall be, but as flesh

is vanity, be it never so holy : as Adam called his best son and holy martyr Abel, that is to say in the Hebrew tongue, vanity (Gen. iv.), perfectly knowing that all flesh by sin was vile and vain, and therefore not to be trusted unto.

This (once) speaking of God is also referred unto the text that followeth, which declareth two virtues in God, power and mercy ; power to punish his enemies, and mercy to recompense his faithful afflicted : and this is so true, that it shall never be made false ; the wicked to feel God's strength in damnation, and the faithful to feel God's mercies in salvation ; not because their works deserve it, but because God of his mercy so contented to bless the poor faithful workman.

Now the Prophet saith, he heard it twice at God's mouth ; that is to say, he knew God had made promise of mercy to save the faithful penitents, and of justice to punish the impenitent sinner. And this he heard in the time of the law of nature, by reading of Moses' books, and also by the Holy Ghost in his own time, when by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost he wrote this Psalm and the rest of his prophecies. The same have we likewise heard, first, by reading of the books of Moses ; next, by reading of the Scriptures of the Prophets ; and thirdly, by reading of the New Testament : the which I pray God give us grace to believe and follow. Amen.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD PSALM.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE matter and argument of this Psalm is a consolation for them that are wont much to be moved and afflicted, when they see the ungodly flourish and prosper in all wealth and pleasure; and contrariwise, the godly and good people oppressed with poverty, and all other calamities and afflictions; as ye may see the Prophet Asaph entreat of this matter in this his first Psalm. The same ye may see also in King David, in his 37th Psalm; wherein he exhorteth men not to judge amiss of God, nor to leave off godly conversation, although the best be punished, and the worse scape quit. These two Psalms, entreating of one matter, are to be read and known of us in these perilous days, lest the hatred and persecution that happeneth to God's truth, and to the lovers thereof, might unhappily make us to judge of God, and to forsake his truth, as many have done, and daily the number of them increase, with the decrease of God's honour, and the increase of their own damnation. For now Christ trieth the chaff from the corn, the rust from the metal, and hypocrisy from truth. If we will not or cannot abide the hammer, or trying-pot that God setteth us in, to explore and search whether our faith will abide the fire of trouble and persecution, or not; if we suffer not, all our religion is not worth a haw. For it is not words that prove faith, but deeds; if it abide the trial, it is true; and the more it is tried, the finer it will be; and at length brought into such fineness, as corruption shall never hurt nor harm it

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in the world of grace and virtue. God therefore grant us grace to suffer his trial, and search strongly, patiently, and thankfully. Amen. (Matt. xxvi. 1 Tim. i. 2 Tim. iv. 1 John, ii. 1 Cor. iii. Heb. xi. Matt. x. James, ii. Gen. xii. xv. xvii. xxii. Rom. iv. Matt. vii.)

THE ORDER OF THE PSALM.

I. THE TEXT AND LETTER OF THE PSALM.

II. THE PARAPHRASE, OR PLAIN EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT AND LETTER OF THE PSALM.

III. THE PRINCIPAL PARTS, AND MOST NOTABLE DOCTRINES CONTAINED IN THE PSALM.

THE TEXT AND LETTER OF THE PSALM OF ASAPH.

THE FIRST VERSE.

1. *Truly God is loving unto Israel; even unto such as are of a clean heart.*

THE PARAPHRASE, OR PLAIN EXPLANATION.

God loveth the godly, although they be afflicted; and hateth the ungodly, although they be in prosperity. The Lord is loving and merciful to such as be afflicted, and specially if their hearts be pure and clean, and judge nothing of God amiss, whether they see the good oppressed, or the evil exalted. In their hearts they murmur nothing at God's doings, nor in their minds they find no fault with God's order and providence. (Matt. v. Luke, vi. Rev. iii. Prov. iii. Heb. xi.)

THE SECOND AND THIRD VERSES.

2. *Nevertheless, my feet were almost gone; my treadings had well near slipped.*

3. *And why? I was grieved at the wicked; I do see also the ungodly in such prosperity.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

Yet notwithstanding, when I saw the good afflicted, and the evil prosper, it troubled my mind;

so that in manner I was forced and compelled, through indignation, to judge of God as other evil men did, and grievously offended his high majesty, in thinking his doings not indifferent, in troubling the good, and quieting of the bad. (Psalm xxxvii. lxxiii. Hab. ii.)

THE FOURTH VERSE.

4. *For they are in no peril of death, but are lusty and strong.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

I perceived further (saith the Prophet), that the wicked lived not only quietly and pleasantly, but also died (in manner) without heaviness or any great torments. Besides all these felicities, pleasures, and ease for their own parts in this world, it happeneth when they die, they leave also pleasant and delectable mansion-houses, great riches, and large possessions to their children.

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH VERSES.

5. *They come into no misfortunes like other folk, neither are they plagued like other men.*
6. *And this is the cause that they be so holden with pride, and overwhelmed with cruelty.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

If any miss of loss and damage in this world, it is they: if sickness flieth from any, it flieth from them: so that much felicity and little adversity cause them to know neither God, their neighbours, nor themselves.

THE SEVENTH VERSE.

7. *Their eyes swell for fatness, and they do what they lust.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

Such as flourish with riches and authority, were proud and arrogant; for all things come so abun-

dantly unto them, that they have more than they look for.

THE EIGHTH VERSE.

8. *They corrupt other; and speak of wicked blasphemy; their talk is against the Most Highest.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

They afflict and cruelly persecute the good and innocent, and they are come to this insolency and pride, that they would not only their abomination should be known, but also they themselves boast of it, and in most abomination most extol and magnify themselves.

THE NINTH VERSE.

9. *For they stretch forth their mouth unto the heaven, and their tongue goeth through the world.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

They be so blinded and deceived with the felicity and trouble of this world, that they spare not God nor godly men; but speak against both, and do their wills and pleasures.

THE TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, THIRTEENTH, FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH VERSES.

10. *Therefore fall the people unto them, and thereout suck they no small advantage.*
 11. *Tush (say they), how should God perceive it? Is there knowledge in the Most Highest?*
 12. *Lo, these are the ungodly; these prosper in the world; these have riches in possession.*
 13. *Then have I cleansed my heart in vain (said I), and washed my hands in innocency.*
 14. *All the day long have I been punished, and chastened every morning.*
 15. *Yea, I had almost said even as they: but lo, then should I have condemned the generation of thy children.*

16. *Then thought I to understand this, but it was too hard for me,*
 17. *Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I the end of these men.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

Because the wicked men prosper so well in this world, the people of God conform and apply themselves to do as they do, and frame their lives and manners unto the rule and fashion of such wicked people as prosper; and they suck and draw into their minds the wicked men's opinions and conversations, and so replenish themselves with iniquity, as the thirsty man doth replenish himself with water. And when the people see the best part turn unto the manners of the worst, and be as evil or worse than the worst, they muse and think whether there be any God, or knowledge in God, that suffereth those abominations. And not only the common people (saith the Prophet Asaph) stood in a mammering, whether God took any heed or cared for the world, seeing that wicked men did so prosper, and the godlier sort so vexed: but I myself also, considering these things with myself, fell into such madness and error of judgment, that I had done evil so to apply myself to virtuous and godly life; seeing I was vexed and turmoiled with continual miseries, and seeing that there was never a day that did not bring her cross and trouble to the servants of God and virtuous people. These things (saith the Prophet) fondly and foolishly I spake to myself many times; but when I weighed the thing with more judgment, and considered the matter more deeply with myself, I thought, if I thus judge and speak of God, do I not reprove, reprehend, and condemn the life, conversation, and labours of all godly men? the which will not be drawn nor enticed from godly life and the love of virtue by any misfortunes or afflictions in this world;

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neither do they judge that they have studied and followed godliness in vain, whatsoever trouble hath happened to them in this world. And therefore; when I assayed to compass the cause and verity of these things, the greatness thereof brought me into much fear and carefulness. And further I perceived that I could not come to the knowledge of these things, except the Almighty God would reveal and open unto me the mysteries and secrets of his providence and wisdom, that I might see and understand what end and outgoing these wicked men should have, that with most abomination and blasphemy in this life had most felicity and pleasure; and by tarrying in the thoughts and cogitations of this case and matter, at last I found, that these wicked men and women, whose felicity and prosperous estate tormented me, their end was most miserable, full of wretchedness and pain.

THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH VERSES.

18. *Namely, thou settest them in slippery places, and castest them down, and destroyest them.*
19. *Oh! how suddenly do they consume, perish, and come to a fearful end!*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

Doubtless the felicities and pleasures, Lord, that thou gavest to these wicked doers, are slippery and brittle: for so may I well call them, because such as enjoy them (for the most part) so abuse them in this life, that they lose the life everlasting.

THE TWENTIETH VERSE.

20. *Yea, even as a dream when one awaketh: so shalt thou make their image to vanish out of the city.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

These wicked men's felicity vanished, as the dream of him that is awaked; for as the dream for a time seemeth to be true, and as long as he sleepeth he

pposeth it to be as he dreameth ; but as the dream
seeth, the sleep being broken, so doth these wicked
men's felicity, when they depart out of this life.

THE TWENTY-FIRST, TWENTY-SECOND, TWENTY-
THIRD, AND TWENTY-FOURTH VERSES.

*Thus my heart was grieved, and it went through
my reins.*

*So foolish was I and ignorant, even as it were a
beast before thee.*

*Nevertheless, I am always by thee : for thou hast
holden me by the right hand.*

*Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after
that receive me with glory.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

Before (saith Asaph) that I saw such wicked men,
flourished in all felicity and pleasure, cast down
adlong from their places, I was wonderfully trou-
bled : and no marvel ; for I was but a fool and an
ot, that perceived not the judgment of the Lord,
t as a beast before thee in that respect, O Lord ;
t didst thou conduct me (such a fool as I am) to
e understanding of thy pleasure, in such difficult
d hard causes. And in their pleasures thou shewedst
e their loss and damnation, and in mine own ad-
sity and trouble shewedst me my salvation and
petual health.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH AND TWENTY-SIXTH VERSES.

*Whom have I in heaven but thee ? And there is
none upon the earth, that I desire in comparison of
thee.*

*My flesh and my heart faileth : but God is the
strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

When the Prophet hath weighed God's judgment
ards such as with iniquity lived in all pleasure,
perceived that their pains were for ever, and

their joys but for a time, he is now inflamed with the love of God, and breaketh forth into these godly words and sentences: Who can delight me in heaven but thou, O Lord? Whom shall I love upon the earth; whom shall I reverence and honour but thee? Doubtless, of all things except thee, I pass nothing of, nor set store by. Thee only I embrace, thee only I desire, and thee only I covet and wish for; for only thou art to be beloved, to be honoured, and to be wished for: so that both my soul and my body be ravished with the love of thee; for thou art the strength and foundation of my soul and body; thou art my riches, my treasure, and my everlasting inheritance.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH AND TWENTY-EIGHTH
VERSES.

27. *For lo, they that forsake thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that commit fornication against thee.*
28. *But it is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God.*

THE PLAIN EXPLANATION.

And good cause have I, O Lord, to love thee: for they shall perish and be destroyed, as many as love any thing besides thee, and forsake thee: therefore, as I know it profitable only to prefer thee, O Lord, in all love and favour; so is it meet that I, being thus saved by thy mercy, and receiving so many benefits at thy hand, should continually with laud and praise celebrate and magnify the marvellous works of thy goodness and providence.

The End of the Paraphrase or plain Explanation.

THE PRINCIPAL PARTS OF PSALM LXXIII.

Ver. 1. *Truly God is loving to Israel, &c.*

The first part is contained in the first verse, and it declareth that God loveth the good, although he punisheth them.

Ver. 2. *My feet were almost gone, &c.*

The second part is contained in the second verse, and it declareth how weak and frail a thing the nature of man is, and upon how small an occasion it is in danger to fall from God.

Ver. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *I was grieved at the wicked, &c.*

The third part is contained in six verses that follow, wherein the felicity of wicked men consisteth, that good men be so sore grieved at.

Ver. 9, 10, 11. *Therefore fall the people unto them, &c.*

The fourth part is contained in other three verses next ensuing; and it declareth how frail, brittle, and weak a thing man is, that for every trifle turneth and withdraweth himself from God.

Ver. 12, 13. *Then have I cleansed my heart in vain, &c.*

The fifth part is contained in two other verses next following; and it declareth how soon men repent their well doings.

Ver. 14. *Yea, and I had almost said even as they, &c.*

The sixth part is contained in one verse next following; and it declareth how great a danger it is temerously to judge of God, or of God's people, without the word of God.

Ver. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. *Then thought I to understand this, but it was too hard for me, &c.*

The seventh part is contained in seven verses next following; and it declareth that man's reason is but ignorant and beastly in considering of God's works, until it be illuminated by God and his word; and

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then is made open, how vain all things be that wicked men possess in this world.

Ver. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. *Nevertheless I am alway by thee: for thou hast holden me by my right hand, &c.*

The eighth part is contained in six verses next following unto the end of the Psalm; and it declareth a wonderful and unspeakable consolation. For although we be grievously tempted, yet we be not forsaken of God, but preserved and lift up, when else otherwise we should fall. And in this part, in setting forth the multitude and number of God's consolations, he draweth near the end of the Psalm, and concludeth it with this text, "I will set forth thy works." Wherewith he declareth that he will be thankful unto God for his great gifts and mercy.

The End of the Parts and chiefest Matters in the Psalm.

WHAT THINGS ARE TO BE MARKED OUT OF THESE PARTS AND MATTERS OF THE PSALM.

Out of

THE FIRST PART

are many things to be noted. First, the nature and condition of God (forasmuch as he hath prepared for men a place of joy permanent and everlasting), is not to reward such as be his, and ordained to the life to come, with so slender and small a recompense in the blood of his Son Jesus Christ, as these worldly and transitory things be of this world (Matt. vi. Coloss. iii. 1 Cor. xv. Matt. xxv. Sol. Song; iv.); but with riches and treasures that shall not corrupt nor be eaten with vermin, nor yet taken from us by thieves. (John. xvii.) As St. Paul saith, "He hath made us to sit with him in the

glory of heaven." (Ephes. ii.) "And as Christ said unto Peter, that became a beggar with the rest of the Apostles in this world, for Christ's sake: "Ye shall (saith Christ) sit upon the twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix.)

We must therefore note out of this place of the Prophet's Psalm, that God, although he whip and scourge us, as we have most worthily deserved, yet he loveth us, and will not take his mercy from us, but once leave beating of us, and burn the rod; and then in Christ reward us with everlasting life. In any case, therefore, we must well assure ourselves in the days of God's punishments, that the end of his crosses and afflictions be the beginning of everlasting joys. For he receiveth none but such as he first correcteth and chasteneth. (Rom. viii. Luke xxiii. Psalm cxix. Rev. vi. xxvii. xxii. Isaiah, lv. Hcs. i. Heb. xii.)

The second learning in this part, is to be persuaded, that God doth not punish without just cause, for that he delighteth in punishing of his people. As the wicked Pharaoh, Nimrod, Saul, and Julian the apostate said, when he had drowned all the world with water for sin, the wicked people judged, that God had punished of a partial and cholerick passion in his fury, without just matter and cause. (Isa. li. Rom. iii. Exod. xiv. Gen. x. 1 Sam. xxviii.) And therefore they went about, in contempt of God, to build a tower so high that God should never have been able to wreak his wrath upon them again. So did cursed Pharaoh; he asked what God that should be, that could plague him and his realm? (Exod. v.) and in the time of his punishment railed and spake most unreverently. Wicked Saul also, when God for his disobedience punished him, he, in despite of God, sought remedy to withstand the punishments of God by

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witchcraft and necromancy. (1 Sam. xxviii.) And Julian the Emperor, when Christ gave him in the wars his death-wound, took an handful of his own blood, and hurled it in despite of Christ into the air, and said, "Thou hast overcome, thou Galilean:" and so in mockery he called Christ and Christian men Galileans. Wherefore, in any case this beginning of the Psalm is to be marked, and used in the time of all men's punishments, and to say with heart and mouth unto the heavenly Father, whatsoever he layeth upon us, "Truly God is loving unto me," &c. And so doth King David cry out, when God was most severe and busy in punishing both him and his people, saying, "Thou art just, Lord, and right: and just is thy judgment." (Psalm cxix.) So did the Emperor Maurice say, when his wife and children were killed before his face, "Thou art just, Lord, and thy judgments are righteous."

Job likewise was of the same mind: although his wife and kinsfolk provoked him to speak impatiently and irreverently of God; yet he said, that he and all his were the Lord's, and that if he had taken them of him, why should not he be contented, that God should have them again at his pleasure? (Job, i. ii.)

These two notes are to be marked and used, whatsoever happen: first, that God purposeth to bestow heavenly pleasures and treasures upon his people; and therefore he will not reward them with the trash and wicked mammon of this life, and transitory vale of misery. The second, when he punisheth his in this world, it is of love; and that the person afflicted must both take it so, and also say so with this Prophet Asaph, "Truly God is loving unto Israel;" that is to say, to him that professeth his religion. (John, xvi. Gal. v. Col. i. 1 Thes. i. Heb. xii. James, i. 1 John, i.)

The third note is to mark that God is known and felt, in the time of punishment and persecution, to be loving, but of such as be of a clean heart. (Psalm cxix. Deut. iv. 2 Sam. xxii. Neh. ix. Psalm xviii. xci. cxviii. Rom. v. xii. 1 Cor. iv. 2 Cor. i.) Whereof we learn, that all men that bear the name of Israelites and of Christian religion, judge neither reverently nor yet patiently of God's punishments, but such Christian men as be of clean hearts. Out of this place we may learn the cause why, in this troublesome time, so many wax weary and fall from the truth of God's word, while God is punishing of us that have been unthankful unto him, and did not live according to his word (the Lord forgive us). Doubtless, now they mislike, and start back: no, not start back, but openly in the face of God's enemies swear and stare, as Peter did, (God send them Peter's repentance!) that they never passed nor cared a jot for God's word. And all is, because they be not, nor ever were of a clean heart; that is to say, so persuaded in their hearts, that God's holy word is the only truth, what punishment soever God lay upon them that profess it. God give us this clean heart, that we may unfeignedly say, Doubtless, the Lord is loving unto his word, and to them that profess it, although he lay thousands of crosses upon them in this world.

Out of this place we be admonished (dearly beloved) to beware of the greatest and abominable evil (one of them) that can be done against God; that is to say, witchcraft, and calculation by astronomy, and such other like. How heinous an offence is this, when we see the heavens rain, the clouds wholly bent to storms and tempests, the winds roaring and in such rage, as all should go asunder, thunder and lightnings as men wonder at; and under all these plagues, tempests, and foul weather,

the young springing corn, the sweet root of herbs, the little withered grass, lie buried and covered under weather and storms, frost and snow, whilst God suffereth winter, and maketh cold to continue. Were it not now witchcraft and very abomination to say and divine of these stormy and winterly tempests, that summer should not be green, parched blades of grain should not come again in the harvest to corn; bitten and buried roots should not at the spring bring forth sweet and pleasant flowers; that shaken and wind-torn trees by tempests should not, in the calm coming of the summer, bud forth their leaves? What witch and cursed man would thus judge of earthly things, that have their times of fading and losing of all beauty for the sin of man? If this be abomination for the bitterness and storms of winter, to condemn and curse the summer to come, because summer's fruits and the spring's beauty be stained and all defiled with winter's barrenness and dim clouds; what is this but ten times more abomination for the bitterness and storms of persecution, to condemn and curse the life to come of God's people, because truth's fruits and the resurrection's glory be stained, and all dishonoured with worldly scarcity, and dim persecution? But as Asaph the Prophet saith, "All eyes see not these things, but such as be of a clean heart." All men have eyes, for the most part, and all men have hearts, but they be such as the worms of the earth and birds of the air can eat and devour; but he that will live in God, and see these things, must have immortal eyes and an incorruptible heart, which cometh by grace in God's Spirit, to see by faith, and honour with reverence God's doings, as well in the winter and cold storms of persecution, as in the summer of felicity and pleasure; and to remember that all men and women have this life and this world appointed unto them for their winter and

season of storms. The summer draweth near, and then shall we be fresh, orient, sweet, amiable, pleasant, acceptable, immortal, and blessed, for ever and ever; and no man shall take us from it. We must therefore, in the mean time, learn out of this verse to say unto God, whether it be winter or summer, pleasure or pain, liberty or imprisonment, life or death, "Truly God is loving unto Israel, even unto such as be of a clean heart."

Out of

THE SECOND PART

are divers things also to be noted.

Ver. 2. *My feet were almost gone, &c.*

First, the Prophet noteth, how wretched and miserable man is, and how soon inclined to do evil. He saith, that he was ready and prest to have slipped from God, even with the beholding of God's own works, when he saw God give unto the wicked felicity and prosperity; which things be only God's riches to give to whom he will. Although he bestowed none of his upon the wicked, yet was he offended that he should bestow his own where he lusted. The same occasion took the workmen in the vineyard to murmur against God; as it is in the Gospel of St. Matthew. (Chap. xx.) So that we be naturally given to this, that God giveth always too much unto others, and too little unto us; yea although he would give us all the world, and yet keep any one thing for himself (even his very Godhead), in case he will not give also that unto us, we be ready to bid him farewell. And in case he will not also give us as much as is in him, such is our nature, that we will by some means or other seek to have it; as we may see, when he had made Adam, and given him both knowledge and power above all

other creatures made for his use, because he was not made God altogether, he fell most heinously from God; and slipped not only in his feet, but also in soul and body, to his utter ruin and destruction, and of us all that come of him. (Gen. iii.) For this is our condition—let God give us never so much, we think it too little (except we have a singular grace to consider it); and let us surrender unto God never so little homage or service, we think it all too much. Such is our cursed nature and first birth, to be ready to slip from God upon the lightest occasion of the world; yea, when God doth other men good, and us no harm. But this nature we have of the devil, our forefather, to disdain and malign at other men's profit and preferment, as he did (Gen. iii.); for when God made Adam, and put him in Paradise, the devil never rested envying Adam's prosperity, until he had brought him to the loss of all together, and to slip clean from the Lord. (John, viii.) This doctrine therefore, touching the brittleness and frailness of man's nature, is to be marked; lest that, whereas the Prophet said, "My feet were almost gone," we slide and fall altogether from God.

There is also to be noted, that the Prophet said, he was almost gone, and not altogether. Here is the presence, providence, strength, safeguard, and keeping of man by Almighty God, marvellously set forth: that although we be tempted and brought (even to the very point) to perpetrate and do all mischief, yet he stayeth us, and keepeth us, that the temptation shall not clean overcome us. And so St. Paul saith of God's providence and present help, that he will not suffer us to be tempted further than we shall be able to bear: and many times when we be brought into the greatest danger and peril both of body and soul, before we fall and

be overcome, the Lord preserveth us and preventeth the evil. As when Abraham went into Egypt, and perceived that the Egyptians would put him in danger for his wife Sarah (for she was a fair woman), he desired her to say, she was his sister; and by that means thought to save himself from danger, and to win favour at the Egyptians' hands. (Gen. xx.) The chastity of this godly matron, Sarah, and wife of Abraham, came into such extreme peril, that neither Abraham nor she knew how to stand fast in the state and chaste condition of matrimony; for she was coupled to the King as his wife. But lest the woman should have fallen, and her feet slipped, the Lord rebuked the King, and told him that Sarah was another man's wife, and unlawful for him; and so, by his merciful defence and goodness, kept all parts from falling in that respect.

The like may ye see also in Judith, the godly woman, that, without a singular grace of God, had fallen with Holofernes, and abused womanhood and widowhood (Judith, xiii.): had not the Lord stayed in time, the fall was imminent and (in manner) at hand. (Judith, vii.) And ye may read the same likewise of the people that were within the city of Bethulia, at the same time how near they were fallen, when they appointed God a time to help them the space of five days; in case he deferred his help any longer, they would yield themselves into the hands of their enemies; but God stayed their fall, and that by the hands of a woman; and if there had not been more mercy in God than faith in them, their feet had not only slipped, but also all the whole land, country, and city. The like ye may see also in the notable history of Esther (chap. iv.), where the very rock and chief stay of the Jews' health, Mardocheus, made suit to the Queen for Ahasuerus' pardon, for the life of the Jews, when sentence and

judgment was passed against them of death. So that, if faith in the promises of God had not stayed him, he had slipped and fallen down, to see all things against him and his countrymen. But before men utterly fall, the Lord is with them, and preserveth them with his mercy ; as David said, " When my feet were moved, thy mercy, O Lord, stayed me." (Psalm xciv.)

The third thing to be noted of these words, is the manner of the Prophet's speaking, which must be marked and understood, or else the reader or hearer of the Psalms shall take no profit.

" My feet were almost gone, and my treadings had well nigh slipped."

By the " feet" he understandeth the mind ; and by the " treadings well nigh slipped," he understandeth the judgment and wisdom of the mind. As foul and slippery ways be dangerous for the feet, so be the works of God to the mind that is not illuminated with the light of God's word ; and as the slipping and running away of the feet causeth all the body to fall, even so the ignorance of the mind causeth both body and soul to fall, and grievously to misjudge the works of God ; and as the fall of the body souseth and defileth itself with mire and dirt, even so doth the fall of the mind defile both body and soul with impatience and envious indignation at God's works.

So that the Prophet saith by these words, " My feet were almost gone, and my treadings had well nigh slipped : " my mind was so troubled to see God suffer the evil in such prosperity, and the good in such adversity, that my judgment almost slipped from the right sentence of thee, O Lord ; and very scarcely I avoided most heinous sin towards thee, in controlling of thy most wise and just doings.

If we marked the pith and wisdom of the Scrip-

ture, we should see many things more in ourselves than we do, and doubtless grow to an excellency in wisdom, and find out what evils we be most inclined unto. Amongst all other, hatred and indignation of other men's prosperity is not the least, nor the most seldom; and indeed, the father of sin, the devil, hath that in him. First, he disdained God and his felicity, but he won nothing thereby but everlasting pains. Then he envied man and his felicity (Gen. iii.); yet the wicked spirit gained nothing to himself but double damnation and loss of us all. And this seed of the devil descended into our nature (as we may see), and made Cain to kill Abel, his brother; made Ishmael to persecute Isaac; Esau, Jacob; Dathan and Abiram, Moses and Aaron; Aaron and Mary his sister, Moses; Jacob's children, Joseph; Saul, David; Herod and the Pharisees, Christ and John the Baptist, the ten Apostles, John and James, Peter, St. John the Evangelist (Gen. iv. xxi. xxvii. Num. xvi. xii. Gen. xxxviii. 1 Sam. xix. Matt. xiv. xxvii. xx. John, xxi. xvi.), and the members of the devil and antichrist in this our time, the members of Christ. So that they be not only almost fallen, but also (the Lord help them and us all!) altogether slidden to envy and indignation, and likewise to violent oppression of God's holy word. But let us not slip nor fall into indignation, that they prosper, and we are afflicted; but say in the midst of these oppressions of the good and prosperity of the evil, "Truly God is loving unto Israel;" and let us pray also for their amendment.

THE THIRD PART.

Ver. 3. *And why? I was grieved at the wicked, &c.*

Herein is contained what the felicity of the wicked is, and wherein it consisteth, that the godly be

offended with all, when they flourish and be in honour; and the poor members of Christ, persecuted and without all honour, and be rather worms than men: yea, the dogs and brute beasts of the enemies be in more estimation than the poor believers in Christ. (Psalm xx.)

Out of this part is to be noted, first, a great fault and oversight in the people of God, for lack of judgment and true knowledge; wherein truth and very felicity indeed consisteth: the lack of the which knowledge maketh men both impatient and lewd judges of God's holy works. The Prophet therefore herein amendeth his own and our ignorance, and willetth us to know perfectly wherein felicity and happiness doth rest. The Christian must understand and assure himself, that the felicity and everlasting beatitude of man is wrought by quietness of conscience and innocency of life: of which two parts and virtues, in this tract I will speak more hereafter, as well what they be, what be the causes of them, as what is the effect of them. I will assure you, if we know not these things well, our religion will be but awhile permanent, and true unto God.

To enter therefore into the knowledge of the matter, wherein the beatitude and felicity of man consisteth: it is requisite to cast some clouds and darkness upon these worldly things that wicked men possess, and godly men think them thereby to be happy. Look, as the sun at the rising and passing over the earth, doth hide and cover the globe and sphere of the moon, and darkeneth also the light and clearness of the stars; even so doth the tranquillity of conscience, and the brightness of faith and charity that dwelleth in the heart of the faithful, darken and hide all things that seem beautiful and voluptuous to the world, and carnal lusts of man. And he that hath a testimony at home in his own

conscience, that he is in the favour of God, will not greatly pass of other men's judgments, whether they save or damn, laud or dispraise; nor yet greatly pass, although he lack such notes of riches and glory, as worldly men judge and know felicity by. For he that knoweth surely wherein felicity doth consist, will not take the worldly opinion of men for his record, nor for his reward; neither will he greatly fear for any damnation or punishment that the world can annex and join unto his life, for this mortal time. It is therefore Christianity to know, that felicity and beatitude resteth in the riches of the mind, by God's grace, wrought by the Holy Ghost, for the merits of Christ.

There was amongst the philosophers great diversity of opinions in this matter, wherein felicity and beatitude should consist. Some said it rested in this, a man still and continually to be void from anguish and sorrow. Others said it consisted in the knowledge of things. Some said, in pleasure and voluptuousness. Aristotle and Theophrastus, and such other as were of the sect of the Peripatetics, did hold, that a blessed and fortunate life did consist in honesty; and said, that the same might be accomplished with the voluptuous pleasures of the body, and with external riches, honour, and felicity. But both these opinions, and all the rest, are confuted by our Saviour Christ, and his holy word. He saith, "This is life everlasting, that men know thee, O Father, the only and true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ." (John, xvii.) And in another place he saith, "Every one that forsaketh house, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, or possessions for my name, shall receive an hundred fold, and possess life everlasting." (Matt. xix.)

By these places we know, that beatitude and felicity consisteth in knowledge and working of God's will, which be the causes of quietness of conscience

and innocency of life: wherein felicity doth consist, as I said before. The right knowledge of God bringeth faith in Christ. Faith in Christ bringeth tranquillity of conscience. Tranquillity of conscience, by faith worketh charity and love, to do and work the will of our heavenly Father. This may ye see also in the book of the Psalms, that felicity and bliss resteth not in those trifling things that glitter to the eye, wherewith the Prophet was so sore offended; but in knowledge and working of God's will. "Blessed is the man whom thou teachest, Lord, and whom thou instructest in thy law." (Psalm xciv.) And in another Psalm he saith, "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and desireth to work his will." (Psalm cxii.) In these Psalms, if ye read them with judgment, and prayer to God, ye shall find both knowledge and consolation, far above the common sort of such as read and use them in the churches now, to the dishonour of God, and to the destruction of their own souls.

And in this matter of felicity and beatitude of man and woman in this life, I would have you judge by the Scripture of God, or else ye shall be deceived, what it is, wherein it consisteth, and what it worketh: for only the word of God teacheth and sheweth it, and nothing but it; the Scripture of God plainly declareth, that nothing can be profitable, which is not honest and virtuous. And virtue is blessed and very felicity, in what condition or state soever it be: neither can it be increased with any external or bodily goods or honour; neither yet can it be diminished with any adversities or troubles. And nothing can be blessed but that which is void from iniquity, full of honesty and the grace of God. As ye may see in the book of the Psalms, where this matter is plainly set forth. "Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor stood in the way of

liners, nor sate in the chair of scorers; but his delight was in the law of God," &c. (Psalm i.) And in another Psalm he saith, "Blessed are they that be clean of life, and walk in the law of God." (Psalm cxix.)

Out of these places we learn, that knowledge and innocency of life work felicity and beatitude. We must therefore beware, that we judge not felicity to be in these inconstant and uncertain riches of the world; but we must condemn them, and also beware we fear not the trouble that may happen, for such virtues wherein felicity doth stand. And we must understand also, that although these virtues, wherein felicity consisteth, and such as be friends of God, be afflicted and troubled; that neither the felicity, nor the person in whom it dwelleth, is any thing the worse for troubles and adversities before God, but rather the better. As ye may see by the word of God, that saith, "Blessed be ye when men speak evil of you, and persecute you, and speak all evil against you, lying for justice sake. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven. So did they persecute the Prophets before you." (Matt. v. x.) And in another place it is said: "He that will come after me, let him deny himself, and take his cross and follow me." (Matt. xvi.) The Psalm therefore, in this part, amendeth the judgment of weak and wavering Christian men, that be offended with the prosperity of the wicked, because they do not know, nor mark by God's word, wherein felicity doth consist, and that it remaineth in such virtues as be not diminished, nor drowned in the adversities of this world, whatsoever dangers happen. When was Moses stronger than when he saw of the one side the mountains of Egypt, and of the other side Pharaoh and his army, and before him the Red Sea, and in the midst of these enemies, he and his people

standing like sheep, ready for the wolves to be slain? (Exod. xiv.) He was never more strong, nor in this life more blessed, than at that time. Daniel was never better than amongst the lions. (Dan. iii.) We must therefore know the virtues wherein felicity doth consist, to be nothing diminished by sorrow and trouble, nor any thing increased by voluptuous pleasures and brittle honours of this world. As St. Paul most godly setteth forth in his Epistle to the Philippians: "The things (saith he) that I thought profit and gains, for Christ's sake, I esteem as hurt and damage; for whose love, I esteem all things as nothing, so that I may win Christ." (Phil. iii. Heb. ii.) And Moses esteemed the treasures of Egypt hurtful, and preferred them not before the reproaches and rebukes of the Lord: neither thought he himself rich nor blessed with the riches of Egypt, nor cursed when he was in need, and lacked them. Elias the Prophet, if he had considered his need and danger (1 Kings, i.), he might have accounted himself very miserable and unhappy: but because he knew it was appointed him of God, he complained not of God's doings, for he was as well contented to have bread from God by the raven in the morning, and water at night from the fountain, as though he had had all the world: and he was nothing the less blessed, although he was poor, but rather more blessed, because he was rich to Godward.

Read the Gospel of St. Matthew, and see the practice of this felicity. (Chap. xvii.) Moses that was so destitute of all worldly help, and Elias void of all worldly consolation, do talk with Christ in the mount of Tabor, where Peter would have tarried with all his heart, although he knew both Christ, and those that he talked with, in the estimation of this world, were accounted most unhappy and miserable of all men: yet he saw that transitory ho-

hours, riches, and felicity, help nothing to the life everlasting. As Christ plainly teacheth in St. Luke, "Blessed are the poor; for theirs is the kingdom of God. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for justice; for they shall be satisfied. Blessed be ye that now weep; for ye shall laugh." (Luke, vi.) Therefore the poverty, misery, and affliction that the Prophet was in, when he spake this Psalm and most godly hymn, hindered nothing at all his felicity, and blessing of God; but rather furthered it, if he had wist wherein truly and verily felicity had consisted; as ye may see hereafter, how he came to the knowledge of it.

Another thing is to be noted out of these six verses, containing the third part of the Psalm: that such treasures, riches, and honours, as men set most by in this world, be rather (unto men that have not grace) lets and impediments to everlasting felicity, and to the attainment of virtue in this life, than furtherers. (1 Tim. vi.) As the Scripture saith: "Wo be unto you rich men, which have your consolation: wo be unto you that are now full, for ye shall hunger. And such as laugh shall weep." (Luke, vi.) Ahab the wicked king, not contented with his kingdom, would take Naboth's vineyard from him (1 Kings, xxv.); but it had been better for him, that he had been a swineherd; for his lands and riches abused, made him to kill an innocent man, and his true subject. Plentifulness of God's gifts abused, bringeth contempt of God and man: as ye may see how Nebuchadnezzar, in wealth and riches, envied the living God, and came into bestiality. (Dan. iv.) The children of Israel, when they had filled themselves with gifts, were not thankful, but unthankful; and fell from unthankfulness to idolatry, and all abomination. (Exod. xxxii.) And as men contemn God in pro-

perity, so do they also their neighbours: as ye may see by this part of the Psalm, where the Prophet saith: "Their eyes swell for fatness:" that is to wit, their riches and honour puff them up in such pride, that they contemn and despise all men.

The third thing to be noted is, that all things that the felicity and joys of wicked men consist in, be but worldly and transitory things, and as uncertain as man is himself; which is to be marked (Deut. xl. Psalm xcii. Isa. xl. Matt. vi. 1 Pet. i.); because no man can be happy or blessed by any such fading and inconstant things: neither can any man come to the beatitude of joys permanent, by such things as God giveth indifferently as well to the bad as to the good, and to the vicious as to the virtuous. As Solomon in the book of the Preacher, marvellously setteth forth, and matcheth equally the good with the bad, in such things as happen under the sun: "The good and the bad (saith he) be rich and poor, in trouble and in prosperity, have friends and foes, be merry and sorry, do live and die all in like." (Eccles. iii. iv. v.) But neither the things that bring them to life everlasting, nor yet life everlasting itself, be one thing. For there is nothing that leadeth to everlasting life but the knowledge and fear of God, and the doing of his blessed will: the which virtues come not by nature, but by grace. As Solomon declareth, when he prayed so earnestly to have wisdom and understanding from God. (1 Kings, viii.)

And as these virtues come not from nature; even so be they not the riches of all men, but of virtuous and godly men only. And as they dwell and inhabit only in such as fear God; so do they only conduct and lead such as be godly (and none other) to eternal life. The which differeth as far and as much from the wicked's eternal life, as joy

PROPER.—EXPOSITION OF THE 73D PSALM. 62D.

differeth from sorrow, ease from pain, pleasant consolation from fiery flames, love from hatred, God from the devil, and heaven from hell. For these riches wherewith the ungodly are indued in this life, be not the things that can make any man blessed or cursed before God; therefore no more to be cared for, than need is; to have them, if God will; if not, to lack them: to have them with God's grace well to use them; or else to pray to lack them, lest they abuse us. Better it were to have too little in the world with God's favour, than too much with his displeasure. (1 Tim. vi.) If we have meat, drink, and clothes, let us be contented with it, as with sufficient things to pass this life: if any more than these come, to take heed they make us not to swell in pride, and take from us the remembrance and service of God. Oh! that godly eyes would look upon this Psalm, and namely upon this part of it, that declareth wherein the glory, honour, and felicity of wicked men consisteth: then I know his eyes shall hardly escape tears and weepings, to see and hear a wicked and cursed creature of God, pampered with such a sort of vain fleetings, that when he would most gladly flee from sorrow, the least be able to carry him away. (Luke, xii.) Mark the wicked man's riches, and ye shall perceive that God hath given no more than he hath unto the clay, mould, and stony earth; wherein lie both gold and precious stones. (Matt. vi.) His beauty and amiableness of vesture and apparel is not like the rose of the garden, nor the lily of the field; his strength much inferior to brute beasts; his wisdom less than horse or mule, that use in meats and drinks enough for necessity, and not too much for sensuality. If lack and need oppress them, patiently they lack until order provide for them: but if the wicked lack, he beareth not lack with pa-

tience, nor seeketh enough by truth. The courageous horse fiercely in fight contemneth death; and the meek swan, feeling the life to pass, with sweet tunes welcometh Atropos, and striveth not, but willingly is contented to surrender that which will not be kept by force. But what doth the rich wicked man? forsooth, as the wise man saith: "O death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to such as have confidence in their riches!" (Eccles. xlii.) Lord! what a charnel-house of stinking carrion is this body and life of wicked man puffed up with riches; inferior, with all that ever he hath, to the birds of the air, the beasts of the fields, and unto the barren clay that he was made of; and the soul itself within that wicked body cursed of God, and ordained to eternal pains.

Who is he that can read or behold the state and honour of man, in whom is not mentioned one virtue to dwell, without sorrow and heaviness? What a cursed nature is man made of, that can see another thus pampered up with God's displeasure, and cannot rather bewail and mourn to see his brother by these riches lost, and cast away, than to envy or disdain at his person? Oh! woe befall them, that fall into this sin of ours, that thus rather with malice and disdain envy the miseries and curses of God upon others, than charitably do go about to amend them, or ruthfully to bewail them! Read (my dear beloved in the Lord) this place, and mark well the wicked men, and learn to pray for them, as God give us all grace to do.

THE FOURTH PART.

Ver. 10. *Therefore fall the people unto them, &c.*

Out of this part is to be noted, how dangerous a thing it is, to be continually assaulted with temptation; and that the end of it, (for the most part) is the

conquest and overthrow of as many as be assaulted. As we may see by the examples of our forefathers, temptation not resisted at the beginning, prevailed against our innocent parents Adam and Eve in paradise; against Cain in murder; against Aaron and the people in idolatry; against Nimrod in pride; against David in adultery; against Judas in avarice; against Aaron and Mary his sister in envy; against Esau in gluttony; against Pharaoh in pride; against Herod in hypocrisy; against the Pharisees in blindness and obstinacy of mind; against the Jews in the slander of Christ's death; against the Gentiles in ignorance of God's word (Gen. iii. iv. Num. xvii. 2 Sam. xi. Matt. xxvi. Heb. xi. Exod. iii. Matt. xiv. John, vii. viii. ix. 1 Cor. i. Rom. i.): against the most part of Christians now-a-days in cowardness and fear; and against all the world, in looking more how to profit itself, than to serve and fear God. The Prophet said before he was almost gone, to see the wicked so prosper: but he saith now, that the people fall utterly unto them, and learn both wicked opinions and wicked life of the wicked.

The second is, that the people fall not into the wicked blasphemy of iniquity one by one, but by clusters, in great number. Wherein is much to be noted, that so few so hardly turn to God, and so many so quickly to abomination. But as Christ said, "The way to heaven is narrow and strait, and few enter; and the way to hell is broad and plain, and many enter in it." (Matt. vii.)

THE FIFTH PART.

Ver. 14. *Then have I cleansed my heart in vain, &c.*

Out of it we be admonished, that our nature is to be offended by and by with troubles, for the

glory of God. And even as we be unquiet with the troubles; so be we inconstant and unstable in the knowledge and truth, that we suffer trouble for: and begin to repent, that ever we began to favour or embrace the truth; and wish also that we had used ourselves, as other men did; and then, to have suffered with other men the common lot and fortune of the world, and not thus to have been given to a singular knowledge of God's word, which bringeth with it a singular hatred and punishment in this world. (Jer. xx.) Such is our nature, if we be by afflictions and troubles, but for a day's space, made like unto Christ, we think it too long; but if we be by sin, for all our lifetime, made like unto the devil, we think the time too short, and wish longer to live, because we would longer work and delight in sin and abomination. Great and heinous is our offence in this respect: for a little time spent in well-doing, we judge too long; and all time spent in evil-doing, we judge too short. All labours and pains be too little, if they be bestowed in worldly things; but if they be appointed to heavenly things (be they never so few and slender), we think them too much.

There is not sea nor land, with all the perils within them, but men dare adventure both their goods and their lives, to win increase of worldly goods; but to win towards God and godliness, scarce one of a great many without danger will labour or take pains to gain it. So doth the Prophet say in this place, that "he had cleansed his heart in vain;" because he saw cleanliness and virtue persecuted, and filth with iniquity honoured and exalted. Christ, in the Gospel of St. John, perceiving, that when virtue and well-doing should be troubled, men should wax weary of well-doing and virtue, he said unto his disciples, "Remember, when they come, that I spake of them, and warned you before." (John, xvi.)

THE SIXTH PART.

Ver. 15. Yea, and I had almost said even as they, &c.

Out of it we learn, that no man should judge of God's works, nor God's people, but by the word of God. In this behalf we do many times grievously offend the Almighty God. For when the world damnableth God's word, then doth the most part of men the same. If the world say it is true, we say so too. If the world say it is untrue, we say it is untrue; and if the world condemn it, we condemn it also: likewise if the world account them cursed and damned, that be persecuted for God's sake, and for the testimony of his name, we do so too. Yea, and moreover, if the world slander and lie upon poor men and poor women, that suffer for God's sake, we speak as they do, and sometimes persecute also the good with them. This is an horrible thing, to reprove (after such a carnal and worldly sort) God, and all his blessed people, which will be at length, doubtless, a just condemnation of the world.

THE SEVENTH PART.

Ver. 16. Then thought I to understand this, but it was too hard for me, &c.

We learn out of this part, that until reason be amended and removed from her natural blindness, it can do none other but condemn both God and God's people. And no marvel; for the Prophet in the 83^d Psalm, and also in the 31st Psalm, hath these words: "They have consulted against thy hidden people;" as though he had said, The merciful Father of heaven keepeth the godly people in most sure and strong defence and protection; but this kind of protection is hid from the eyes of man's reason. So that it seemeth many times, that God hath the less care of the godly, and passeth more of the wicked than of them. Yet, howsoever the world judgeth,

God sleepeth not. Further, how blessed the state and life of the godly is, and how cursed the life and state of the wicked is, only the virtuous and godly do perceive. Therefore the Scripture calleth those that be godly and virtuous, the hidden of God. Moreover, the godly do perceive, that all the vanity of worldly things, which be the treasures of the wicked, and the permanent state and condition of heavenly things, which be the treasures of the godly, be only seen of such as enter into the holy sanctuary and secret treasures of God's most holy word, without the which, worldly things seem to be riches, and heavenly things poverty; wicked men to be blessed, and godly men cursed; falsehood to be truth, and truth falsehood; death to be life, and life death.

THE EIGHTH PART.

Ver. 23. *Nevertheless, I am alway by thee, for thou hast holden me always by my right hand.*

The Prophet out of this part declareth that which St. Paul writeth to the Romans (chap. viii.): "If God be with us, who can be against us? If he love us, what is he that can separate us from his love? which spared not his only Son for our redemption, but gave him for us unto the death. Therefore, there is neither life nor death, things present nor things to come, that can separate us from him."

Unto this place is referred all the deliverance from trouble and danger that God used from the beginning of the world unto our time. And when we understand and know God's mercy towards ourselves and others, we must give ourselves wholly to laud and praise his holy name, and be thankful: for there is nothing more unnatural in man, than forgetfulness of God's great and innumerable gifts towards us. To whom be all honour and praise, world without end. Amen.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE SEVENTY- SEVENTH PSALM.

THE ARGUMENT.

WHEN this Prophet Asaph (being a man appointed to the service and teaching of God's word unto the people) perceived that such as were under his cure and charge were many times troubled and brought into great heaviness, for the fear and dread they had conceived of God's most just ire and strait punishment for sin, and transgression of his holy laws; and in himself felt especially the burden of God's displeasure against sin intolerable, he received from the Holy Ghost (the Spirit of consolation) what was the best remedy and help for every troubled conscience, to appease and quiet the poor spirit of man, that knoweth and feeleth not only that God is justly angry for sin, but also will straitly punish the iniquity and abomination of the same. And when he had learned himself by God, how a troubled and desperate conscience might be quieted, he spake it to such as were alive and with him, and wrote it to all such as should come after him until the world's end, that troubled sinners might see their sins forgiven in the mercy of God, and they themselves accepted, as God's most dear children, into eternal friendship and endless joys of salvation.

THE PARTS OF THE PSALM.

- I. In whom a Man should put his Trust, and to whom he should resort in the Days of Sickness, Troubles, and Adversity.
- II. How a Man should use himself towards Him, in whom he putteth his Trust in the Time of Trouble.
- III. What great and perilous Dangers the Man that is troubled shall suffer for the Time of his Trouble.

IV. How a Man taketh Consolation in the Time of his Trouble.

THE TWO FIRST VERSES OF THE PSALM, CONTAINING THE TWO FIRST PARTS.

1. *I will cry unto God with my voice, even unto God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.*
2. *In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord: my hand I held up all night, and it was not weary: my soul refused comfort.*

THE FIRST PART.

IN WHOM A MAN SHALL PUT HIS TRUST, AND TO WHOM HE SHOULD RESORT IN THE DAYS OF SICKNESS, TROUBLES, AND ADVERSITY.

Ver. 1. *I will cry unto God with my voice: even unto God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.*

First out of this text it is to be noted, that God only is to be trusted unto in the days of trouble, as our Saviour Christ exhorted, in heaviness and anguish of body and soul, all people to resort unto him, saying: "Come unto me all ye that be laden and burdened, and I will refresh you." (Matt. xi.) And the same is spoken of God by Isaiah the Prophet: "Ye that be athirst, come unto the waters; and ye that have no money, come and take it freely." (Isaiah, lv.) St. John likewise, in the midst among troubled and afflicted persons, reciteth the words of Christ, saying, "If any be dry, let him come to me, and drink." (John, vii.) "He that believeth on me (as the Scripture saith), floods of water of life shall flow out of his belly." (Isaiah, xii.)

Of this knowledge and surety in the soul of man, that God is, can, and will be an ease and remedy for the troubled conscience, come justice, peace, and joy of the conscience. (Rom. v. xiv.) Not that any

man shall be by and by without all fear, trembling, and dread of his sins, and of God's just judgment against sin, but that this fear and trembling shall not come to desperation; neither shall he be more afraid of his sins, than comforted by God's mercy and grace in Christ. Therefore saith our Saviour Christ, "Blessed be they that weep, for they shall be comforted. Blessed be they that hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be replenished." (Matt. v.) In this that he saith, "Blessed be they that weep," he noteth such as do know and feel with sorrow and heaviness of conscience that they be sinners, and the filthiness of their sins maketh them sorrowful and heavy-hearted; yet shall they in Christ be comforted. Again, the poor, sensible, feeling, and troubled sinner doth wish his sins away, and would gladly have virtue and justice to rule and do altogether in him God's holy will and pleasure. This hunger and thirst (saith Christ) shall be quenched for the merits of his own death and passion; as it shall not miss, if men in their thirst, hunger, persecution, and trouble, do know and use only God for their help and consolation, as this Prophet did, and teacheth us to do the same in this Psalm.

In this first part be two sorts of people condemned. The one is such as plainly despair, and in their troubles neither look for consolation, nor yet believe that there is any consolation to be hoped for in Christ: the other is such as seek consolation, but not only at God's hand and power, but at the saints departed, as witches, conjurors, hypocrites, and the works devised and done by man.

The first sort be left comfortless, because they seek no consolation; and the second sort find no comfort, because they seek it where it is not, contrary unto God and his holy word. Happy therefore is the troubled, that seeketh consolation at God's hands,

and no where else. "For he is (as it is written by the Prophet Isaiah) the God alone that doth save, and none but he." (Isaiah, xlv.) But there be two manner of impediments that keep the Almighty God from the helping and comforting of people that be in trouble. The one is ignorance of God's nature and property towards the afflicted; and the other is fear and dread, since God is most justly angry for sin, lest that in his anger and just punishment he will not be merciful.

Of the first impediment, which is ignorance, is sprung into the world horrible blasphemy, that neither seeketh help at God's hand, nor yet is thankful unto God for any thing that God giveth; but rendereth all things to such gods and saints as he hath devised out of his own imagination, or else learned (as St. Peter saith) out of the traditions of his elders (1 Pet. i.); so that ignorance taketh away the honour of God, and also the salvation of them that be ignorant. The remedy against this great impediment is only the reading, meditating, hearing, and learning of God's holy word (2 Pet. i.), which is as a candle-light in a dark place, to keep and preserve a man from danger and peril. And so saith King David, that it is a candle unto his feet, and a light unto his steps. (Psalm cxix.) And in another place of his Psalms he saith, The law of God is so perfect, that it turneth souls unto the Lord. Wherefore (saith he) it is the part of every man that will be virtuous and godly, to have his desire and cogitations in the law of God both day and night. (Psalm i.) And to preserve the people from this horrible impediment of ignorance, God spake by his Prophet Isaiah these words: "My Spirit, which is in thee, and my words, which I put in thy mouth, shall not depart from thy mouth, and from the mouth of thy seed (saith the Lord), from henceforth for evermore." (Isaiah, lix.) And in the same

prophecy Christ prayeth the heavenly Father to seal his word in his disciples, whereby the dangerous impediment of man's salvation, which is ignorance, might be eschewed and avoided. (Isaiah, viii.) The same remedy against ignorance, commandeth Almighty God also by Moses in Deut. (chap. vi.), and by St. Paul to the Ephesians (chap. vi.); whereas the fathers and the mothers be not bound themselves alone to know the law of God, but also bound to teach it to their children, that by ignorance they offend not God.

Of the second impediment, which is fear and dread of God's justice, cometh trembling and terror of the conscience, and many times also the extremest evil of all evils, very desperation, that never looketh who can help, neither yet trusteth to find any help. But of these fruits of terror and fear, and also of their remedies how they may be cured and holpen, it shall be shewed hereafter in the Psalm, as it followeth, where both terror of conscience and tranquillity of the same be marvellously and divinely set forth. Only until I come to those points I do note, that this fear and terror of conscience in the faithful be the very hunger and thirst that Christ saith shall be quenched (Matt. v.), and they that feel them shall be replenished with grace and consolation, as the blessed Virgin, the mother of Christ, saith; and they that feel them not, shall depart empty without grace. (Luke, i.) And the cause of this terror and fear is the spirit of God that worketh the knowledge of our sin by preaching, reading, or thinking of God's law, that openeth and detecteth how wretched and sinful we be by nature in the sight of God. (Rom. iii. v. vi. vii. viii.) But of this matter is better occasion ministered afterwards in the Psalm, than in this place.

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THE SECOND PART..

**HOW A MAN SHOULD USE HIMSELF TOWARDS HIM,
IN WHOM HE PUTTETH HIS TRUST IN THE TIME
OF TROUBLE.**

**Ver. 2. *In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord:
my hand I held up all night, and it was not weary:
my soul refused comfort.***

In this part is taught us, both by doctrine and by example, how we should use ourselves in the time of trouble. When we know there is no help nor helper but God alone, it is not enough for a man to know that God can help; but also we must believe constantly, that he hath as prompt a will to help, as a sufficient power able to help: and then being assured that he both can and will help, we must call upon him for help, according to his commandment unto us: "Call upon me in the days of trouble," &c. (Psa. l. xv.)

Out of this place we may mark and learn, what an intolerable burden and unspeakable sorrow the terror and fear of sin is, and how grievous a thing the sight and contemplation of God's displeasure and just judgment is against every sinner for his sin and transgression of God's most holy law. The text saith, that the Prophet, when he felt the displeasure of God against sin, cried out with a loud voice unto the Lord; whereby we learn, that the conscience of man admonished by the word of God, of the filthiness and abomination of sin, bringeth all the body into a trembling and fear, lest God should use rather justice, and justly punish sin, than mercy, and mercifully forgive sin.

And thus being made afraid thoroughly of sin, the mind is occupied with sorrowful and heavy cogitations, and the tongue by vehemency of the spirit brought into clamours and cries. As we may see commonly by examples left unto us in the word of God, that where sin is thoroughly felt in the con-

science, the feeling sinner is not only troubled within in spirit, but also outwardly in all the members and parts of his body, as it is to be seen most manifestly in King David.

In what a sea of heaviness was King David in his conscience, when he spake to his own soul: "Why art thou so heavy and sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou thus trouble me?" Again: "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?" (Psalm xlii.) And in other Psalms we may see, into what trembling and fear outwardly he was brought by the knowledge and feeling of his sin.

In one place he saith, the fear of his sins did not only overlay his conscience, but also crushed and (in manner) almost broke his bones. (Psalm xxxviii.) And in another place (Psalm vi.) his visage was all defaced with weeping tears, and so abundantly they gushed out of his eyes, that he watered, or rather overflowed his bed with them, where he lay. Into what horrible cries and wailings many times he fell for fear of sin, this Psalm and many other do declare. The like horror and fear also of the sight and feeling of sin we see to have been in St. Paul, when he cried out upon himself, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body subject unto death?" (Rom. vii.) And Mary Magdalen, with the sight and feeling of God's displeasure against her sin, made tears and weepings enough to wash the fountain of mercy's feet, Jesus Christ. But blessed is that conscience feared by the law, whose fear by the sweet promises of the Gospel is turned into mirth; and blessed be those tears and weepings that end in consolation; and happy is that troubled body, whose end is immortality in the resurrection of the just. (Psalm cxxvi. Matt. v. 1 Cor. xv.) Further, as we see here King David, a sinner, for fear of God's judgment, brake out into loud cries for help and pre-

ervation: the same anguish and trouble of mind and of body, for fear of God's punishment for sin towards man, was likewise in Christ without sin, which said, "My soul is heavy unto death." (Matt. xxvi.) And in such an agony was his body, that he burst out and sweat both water and blood.

So that of this second part, first we learn, that such as be truly and unfeignedly brought to a knowledge, feeling, and repentance of their sins, have it with great heaviness of mind, terror of conscience, and trouble also of the body many times; but no sickness nor troubles may be compared to the trouble of the conscience, for fear of due and condign punishment for the sin perpetrated and committed against God's laws.

The second doctrine that we be taught out of this second part is, to declare what difference there is between the penitent Christian in adversity, and the desperate person that looketh for no help, or else the presumptuous person that contemneth help.

The penitent afflicted calleth unto the Lord, and although he find his burden never so intolerable, doth weep and lament never so sore, yet he despaireth not, but in adversity he hath hope, and is not confounded, as in prosperity he hath faith, and yet presumeth not. The desperate man feeleth all troubles and no consolation, is wholly overcome with mistrust, full of incredulity, and cleau void of hope; as Saul, Judas, and others. The contemner of admonition hath hope in prosperity, with all presumption; as Cain and Pharaoh; and in adversity, desperation, with all mistrust and diffidence. The Christian afflicted, calleth in faith and hope upon the Lord, and is heard: the wicked afflicted, calleth not upon the Lord, but is cleau rejected and comfortless by God's most just judgment. The Christian afflicted, seeth all his sins less than the least mercies of God; the wicked

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afflicted, seeth the least of his sins greater than the greatest mercies of God. The one in trouble, by faith glorifieth the Lord, and by mercy findeth salvation: the other in trouble, by mistrust dishonoureth the Lord, and by justice findeth damnation. The one by troubles through faith in Christ is made like unto the Son of God, and cannot be separated from him in eternal life: the other, by troubles through desperation of Christ, is made like unto Satan, and cannot be separated from him in eternal death. The one, in eternal life, findeth everlasting joys: the other, in everlasting death, findeth endless pains. Almighty God therefore grant us grace, in all our troubles and afflictions, penitently and faithfully to call upon him, and to find him merciful unto us his wretched creatures. Amen.

The third thing to be noted in this second part is, that God's nature and man's differ much one from the other: for man (for the most part) is no more serviceable unto God, nor longer friendly unto man, than God's condition upon the earth is fortunate and quiet with the world; for if storms arise for God's cause, and troubles happen where quietness erst had place, the men of the world alter their love, service, and reverence, and will neither make nor meddle with God nor his cause; no, although ten thousand idols be brought in for one God, as Englishmen have seen in former times, as long as Christ had a king in this realm to hold of his part, and that great livings, gains, friendship, and love of the world rose for God's sake, they dissembled towards his word, and so long as fair words could please God, he lacked none: but now even such as God did most for, do know neither God nor his word, but had rather hear ten times spoken of the falsest tradition that ever man brought into the church, than one of Christ's most holy Gospel; so

that now men's natures, for adversities' sake, be clean turned from God.

How long the love of man continueth towards men, daily experience sheweth. Within one month, if a man fall into trouble for the most just cause, he that was his friend will not only alter his love from him, but also all the notes and tokens of the same. Whereas in prosperity he was assured both of friendly words and friendly works, in adversity he shall find neither words nor works, except words and works of displeasure. In prosperity fair looks and amiable countenances were as common as the cart-way : in adversity there shall neither look nor countenance be shewed, except it be frowning and bending of brows ; yea, and moreover, adversity taketh from the dissembling friend all knowledge that ever he had of his friend afflicted, that if the poor afflicted (although he be even under the nose of his feigned friend) with courtesy and all obeisance cannot be known.

O God ! blessed be thy name, that withdrawest neither thy knowledge, love, nor yet thy help from the poor afflicted, but hearest them, and grantest them their godly and honest request ; as here this Prophet most godly and comfortably writeth of thee ; for he saith, " The Lord shall hearken unto me, when I seek him in the time of trouble." And also the Lord abhorreth not to be present with the afflicted, be his troubles never so great : " For I am (saith the Lord) with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and set him in honour," &c. (Psalm xci.)

Of this doctrine we learn two things : the one, that God hateth not the troubled man for his troubles, but for his sins. Men do clean contrary for the most part ; for they hate the man for trouble and not for sin : for let the wickedest man alive have prosperity, and all wicked men will love him

for his prosperity's sake. God turneth not his favour from man for trouble, but for sin. The world for trouble sake will not know the most dear and honest friend; but let the most wicked that liveth by breath have prosperity, and wicked people will not fail to know him with beck and regard, if he come into company; yea rather than fail, the most wicked man alive shall be narrowly sought out, that wicked men may have acquaintance of him. But he that hath God to his friend, is sure of a Saviour as well in adversity as in prosperity; as the Prophet here declareth, which can in troubles send ease, and in quietness continue joys for ever. To him therefore be all laud and praise, world without end. Amen.

The fourth thing to be noted in this second part, is the continuance of the faithful afflicted in prayer unto God. For the Prophet saith, that he lifted up his hands all night, and waxed not weary. Of this continuance in prayer we learn two things: the one, perseverance in prayer; and the other, patient expectation and willing sufferance until God send redress and ease. To the first the Scripture exhorteth us, that we pray both heartily and continually unto God, not because he is ignorant of our troubles, but because we should thoroughly be brought to understand that there is none can help us out of trouble but he; and also that by continuance in prayer we may the better know, and more earnestly repent our sins, that be the cause of our troubles: thirdly, that by often remembrance and divers rehearsals of our iniquity unto God, we may the sooner bring both our souls and bodies into the service and homage of Almighty God, whom we have by sin most grievously displeased.

The second virtue, patient expectation in troubles, declareth that we be much bound unto God, that

solation, as long as his sins were felt and not pardoned. Whereof followeth this saying,—a small trouble of conscience putteth away all joy and mirth of the world. Wherefore it is wisdom, and also the duty of all Christian people, to avoid sin and the enmity of God, which only troubleth the conscience, and to put the body to all pains possible, yea, and to death itself, rather than to put the soul in danger towards God: as St. Paul writeth to Timothy his disciple, and not without cause. (1 Tim. i.) For as the spirit that contemneth God, and seeleth (for his contempt) God's displeasure, cannot take comfort, but is full of anguish and heaviness inward, and in the outward man full of pain and sorrow (Isaiah, lxvi.); so likewise shall the soul in the life to come inwardly feel unspeakable grudgings and sorrows, and outwardly the unquenchable and everlasting fire of hell. (Rev. xiv.) And here is to be noted, that the very elect and dearest friends of Christ be not free from trouble and anguish of mind for their sins perpetrated and committed against God. But this is a consolation, that the elect, as they find anxiety and anguish of mind for sin in this life; so in this life is the conscience that is troubled by grace quieted, that it may after this life find eternal rest. And it is a common order and ordinary way, whereby God useth to bring the sinner to acknowledge and repent his sin; and so from knowledge and repentance to the forgiveness of his sin, to shew and set before the conscience of the sinner, his sin; as the example of King David and others doth declare: "My sin (saith David) is always before me." (Psalm li.) As though he had said, In case I could hide mine iniquity from all the world, yet can I not excuse it before God, nor hide it from mine own conscience. And every man's sins thus open before God, and known and felt in his own conscience,

bring the soul into this discomfort and heaviness, that it refuseth all consolation and comfort; as this Prophet Asaph saith marvellously in this second verse of his Psalm.

There is to be noted out of this comfortless spirit of the Prophet Asaph, another most necessary doctrine for every Christian creature, which is this: that there is two manner of discomforts, or two sorts of heaviness in the word of God, that is appointed to lead us in the time of this wretched life: as there is in it also two manner of consolations. There is two manner of brightness and clearness, and two manner of darkness and obscureness in it; as it shall appear in the treatise of this Psalm hereafter: and because the diversity is not marked, the word of God doeth many times, and in many places and persons, no good at all.

There is a discomfort inwardly, and a discomfort outwardly, in the Scripture. The discomfort inwardly is, when the sinful man or woman seeketh and suffereth the same discomfort in his soul, that the law of God doth open and proclaim against him for his sins committed against God and his law: so that, as the law commandeth after this sort: "Repent ye" (Matt. v. Mark, i.); so the man that is commanded by the law to be sorry and heavy for his sins, is sorry and heavy indeed, by the working of God's spirit: as we may see in Adam, what inward fear and discomfort he had, when he heard the voice of God after the doing of his sin: Cain the like, David the same, with Peter, Paul, and others in the word of God. (Gen. iii. iv. 2 Sam. xi. Matt. xxvii. Acts, ix.)

This discomfort inwardly is felt of all God's elect, that be able to learn and know the nature of God's law, and the damnation and curse of God upon sin; for this is a general commandment to all flesh born

and conceived in sin, "Repent ye." (Matt. iii. Mark, i.) It is also many times felt of such as die, and lived wickedly, as Saul and Judas, whose spirits in their discomforts refused all consolation, and so died without comfort in great anguish and perturbation of mind. (1 Sam. xxxi. Matt. xxvii. Mark, xiv.) But that is not general in all wicked and damned persons; for many times they feel no discomfort nor heaviness of spirit inwardly in this world; but God, of his unspeakable wisdom and justice, maketh them (for their sins) alive, and in security of conscience, to go to hell: as Pharaoh, whilst he followed the Israelites in persecution into the Red Sea, suddenly was drowned (Exod. xiv.): Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whilst they were doing their sacrifices, God killed them in opening the earth that swallowed them alive down into hell. (Numb. xvi.) Now this inward discomfort, although it end not in joy, but only in such as believe their sins to be forgiven in the death and passion of Christ (Rom. iii. v.); yet we see by the examples of the Scripture, that both good and bad suffer and feel this, that their spirit will take no comfort.

But now as concerning outward and external discomfort, which is felt as well of such as have the word of God, as such as have not the word of God, but only the law of nature. As we may see in the time of the law of nature how Noah shewed the discomfort of all men, and the destruction of the world for sin: but this discomfort did not enter into the spirits of the hearers. (Gen. v. vi.) Christ complaineth of the same, that the people had both discomfort and comfort preached unto them; and yet they received none of them both. "To whom (saith Christ) should I compare this generation?" It is like boys that sit in the streets, and cry unto their fellows, and say, "We have played upon our timbrels

to you, and you have not danced : we have sung mourning songs unto you, and ye have not wept." (Matt. xi. Luke, vii.) God, by his Prophet Isaiah, saith the same : " All the day long have I extended forth my hand unto an unfaithful and intractable people" (Isaiah, lxxv.) ; meaning, that whatsoever he threatened, or gently offered unto the Jews, it came no further than the outward ear. Whereof both the Prophets and Christ himself grievously complain, in this sort : " They have ears, and hear not ; and they have eyes, and see not." (Isa. liii. vi. Matt. xiii. John, xii. Rom. xi. i.) St. Paul rebuketh men also, that by the law of nature knew good, whereof they should have rejoiced ; and evil, whereof they should have lamented ; and yet did not. And to leave off the examples of our fathers mentioned in the Scripture, we may see the same by daily experience amongst ourselves. We read in the book of God, we hear by preaching, we know in our own consciences, the displeasure and anger of God against us for our sins. God outwardly sheweth us the same with many horrible plagues : as by sickness, war, sedition, scarcity, enmity, and hatred ; by the deliverance and surrender of a whole realm (to the utter destruction thereof) into the hands and rule of a stranger, and by the delivery and giving over of Christian souls into the hands and rule of the antichristian Pope, and his wicked clergy : and yet this discomfort cometh no further than our outward ear. If Asaph, the author of this Psalm, were amongst us, he would say, his spirit would take no consolation. And this is an horrible plague, that weekly this Psalm is read amongst the Popish clergy ; and yet it bringeth their spirits to no sorrow nor feeling of God's displeasure. Wherefore our own experience teacheth that there is an inward and an outward discomfort in

this Psalm, and in the rest of God's most holy word. The one, penitent sinners feel, and by it amend their lives; and the other, some wicked men feel, and yet despair: but of the most part of the world, it is not felt at all. Whereof cometh the contempt of God, the love of ourselves and of the world, and the loss of our sinful souls in the world to come. Let us therefore mark the Scripture that teacheth this discomfort, and pray to God, that, as we see it in the letter, so we may feel it in the spirit. Of the two manner of consolations, it shall be said in the next verse; and of the brightness and darkness also, in the Psalm hereafter.

Now in the trouble of the spirit is another thing to be considered, whereof the text also maketh mention; that is, how the discomfort of the spirit had continuance all the night. Whereof is to be gathered the greatness of discomfort. For as the night is a very image of death, and the bed a very similitude of the sepulchre and grave; even so is the discomfort of the spirit in the night, that will not suffer the body to take rest, but to be unquieted with itself. The which unquietness of the spirit is a very similitude and image of eternal discomfort in the world to come, that both body and soul, which were created first to inherit the heavenly bliss, after the fall of Adam should rest by night (as King David saith), and after this life, for sin unforgiven should for ever be disquieted in the unquenchable fire of hell.

Here may we learn the circumstances and causes, how the trouble of the Prophet Asaph's spirit was increased. (Psalm xxxix. Rom. v. vii. viii.) It was trouble engendered by sin (the occasion only of all men's miseries), opened and revealed unto the conscience by the law; condemned by justice to eternal fire (Rom. v. vii. viii.); and it continued all night: yea,

how much more, the Scripture declareth not. In the which night, the darkness thereof represented unto his eyes outwardly the horror of hell prison; and also his bed the grave and sepulchre, wherein all flesh is clad, after the spirit departeth. The sheets of man's flesh after this life, be nothing but earth above and earth underneath: as, whilst it liveth, it is clad with such vain things as grow upon the earth.

This whole night in discomfort of the spirit, declareth two notable things: first, how earnestly God is angry indeed with sin, that putteth man to such long pain for it; and the next, how gracious a God he is, that will not yet suffer the discomforted spirit to despair in his discomfort, as it followeth marvellously in the next verse.

Ver. 3. When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God: when my heart is vexed, I will complain. Selah.

Whilst Asaph was thus troubled in spirit, he remembered the Lord, and called unto him for help.

First, out of this verse it is to be considered, that nothing can quiet the comfortless spirit, but God alone. But for us, much as it seemeth by the parts of this Psalm that follow, that this verse came in by occasion, rather than to shew a full remedy for the Prophet's trouble: I will not write what I think thereof, but defer the remedy against trouble to such other verses as follow: because the Prophet said before, that his spirit could take no consolation, and that a great many of troubles follow, as the Psalm declareth. It sheweth that he was not able to bear the troubles of the mind alone, without the invocation and help of God. Wherefore, before he expresseth by writing all his troubles, he writeth

also, how, in the midst of them, he did remember and put his trust in the Lord.

Out of this we learn how necessary it is in time, at the beginning of troubles and temptations, to remember the Lord, and to call unto him for mercy. For the more temptations do grow without present assistance of God's grace, the greater is the damnation, and the more is the danger thereof: as we may see in the examples of the Scripture.

Adam fell into anxiety and discomfort of spirit, and God immediately told him of his fault, and by God's grace his discomforted spirit was quieted in the promises of God. (Gen. iii.) Cain, by the murder of his brother Abel, felt the discomfort of the spirit, and by neglecting of God's calling, died in the same. (Gen. iv.) David, being admonished by God's grace, found rest for his unquieted spirit. (2 Sam. xii.) Saul, in deferring the remedy of God's grace, died comfortless. (1 Sam. xxxi.) Peter at the beginning, through God's grace, with one look of Christ put away discomfort: Judas, with contemning Christ's admonitions, died in horrible despair. (Matt. xxvii.)

Whereof we learn to beware (as much as may be), that temptations grow not so far, that God's admonition, or the remembrance of God's name, be forgotten; but that we do, in the midst of discomforts (as Asaph the Prophet did), remember and call upon the Lord for help. There is also by this remembrance of God in the discomfort of the spirit, to be noted, what a vanity all the world and worldly things be for man in time of trouble, when God shall shew and reveal unto man his sins.

This Asaph (as we read in the Scripture) was a man, whom, for his virtues and good qualities, king David appointed to be a musician for the comfort of many, until the building of the temple of Jerusalem: yet now (as we see) he is not able to

solace himself with his music, nor yet with any worldly thing; but his only comfort is in the Lord. And here the Prophet declareth the truth of Christ's sentence, written in St. Luke (chap. ix.): "What doth it profit a man to win all the world, and to lose his own soul?" What eternal riches can comfort the inward spirit, troubled with sin and transgression of God's law? None at all, doubtless; as the Scripture sheweth examples every where. All King David's kingdom was not able to appease his troubled and discomfited spirit, when he said to his troubled soul: "Why art thou so heavy and sad, my soul, and why dost thou trouble me?" (Psalm xlii. xliii.)

Now this one thing more I will mark in this verse, and no more, because it is more fully used by the Prophet for the comfort of discomfited spirits in the verses that follow.

I said there were two kind of consolations in the word of God: the one, outward in the face and lesson of the letter; and the other, inward in the understanding and feeling of the spirit. And of this division must great heed be taken: for it is not every man that readeth and teacheth that Christ died for the remission of sin, that shall have the consolation of the redemption promised in Christ's blood. For we see and read, (God give us grace to learn it!) that Adam caused his sons to hear of his own fall in Paradise, and the redemption of his fall in the blood of Christ to come (Gen. iv.); as Abel, his younger son, right well perceived: yet did Cain, hearing the same consolation, perish in his sin. There was consolation and rest promised unto all them that came out of Egypt; but none took the benefit thereof, but Joshua and Caleb. There was in the outward letter promised consolation unto all Abraham's children; but none

received the commodity thereof, but such as in spirit followed the faith of Abraham. The Scripture saith in the letter, that God would all men to be saved; yet we see such as follow not the spirit offered he damned. God, by his word, in the time of holy and blessed King Edward the Sixth, offered consolation to all this realm; yet none shall enjoy it but such as in their spirits have learned, kept, and do follow the word of consolation. So our Saviour Christ, in St. Matthew, doth say: "Not every man that calleth me Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God; but he that followeth in Christ God's commandments."

There be a great many at this day (as there were before our time), that know and speak of such consolation, as is contained in the letter and utter bark of God's word; but in their consciences they feel not indeed the consolation thereof. As Judas preached abroad, with the rest of his companions, consolation to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but he shewed unto others that he felt not himself. So did the Pharisees, when the Scripture was read every Saturday in their synagogues, shew that Messiah should come to redeem the world; yet they themselves (for the most part) felt not the consolation indeed, that the Scripture did testify of Christ. Even so, at this present, many read this Psalm (and daily almost in the letter), whereof if it be in English, he that understandeth not but the English tongue, seeth great consolation in the letter, and also in the Prophet Asaph, that used the Psalm; yet when need should be, the inward consolation of the Psalm, of many is nothing felt. The cause is, that either they understand it not, or else mark it not: either they think (as the Papists do teach), that to say or sing the Psalm without understanding and feeling of it in the spirit, is sufficient for the work

itself, and thus it pleaseth God: *Ex opere operato*, as they term it.

It is too evident, and also too horrible (if it pleased God), that men be contented only with the external consolation contained in the word of God. For if they hear that God's commandments be true, and full of consolation, they be contented to hear of them in the letter or by speech, and never learn them or feel them by heart. The like is in the articles of our Christian religion. They are thought to be true and godly; and yet the most part that so judge, neither learn them nor feel them in their conscience; wherefore they do outwardly and inwardly as much idolatry contrary to their creed, by the commandment of men, as can be devised: for their consolation of faith is no more but such an outward knowledge, as the most men hold withal, without any proper judgment, or singular feeling of their own spirits. The same is likewise in prayer; for in the external letter there is so much consolation as may be; but in the heart of him that prayeth, is there no understanding nor feeling of the consolation that outwardly is spoken and talked of. Therefore, mark this order of the Prophet Asaph. He said that his spirit could take no consolation in all the night-time, whilst he held up his hands. And as there is not only discomfort and unquietness spoken of, but also felt; not only noted and written in the letter of the Psalm, but also thoroughly felt inwardly in the spirit with heaviness and anguish, without comfort and consolation: so in this verse is there consolation in the letter, in the voice, and in the mouth mentioned of, and inwardly the same consolation felt in the spirit. And as outwardly God's displeasure troubled him, so inwardly God's holy name and promises comforted him. And this is to be noted, lest we should hear

of consolation outwardly, or read it in the book of the Holy Bible; and yet inwardly neither feel nor know any consolation at all.

In the end of this verse is put this word "Selah." And it doth note unto the reader or hearer, what a miserable and comfortless thing man is in trouble, if God be not present with him to help him. It is also put as a spur and prick for every Christian man and woman to remember and call upon God in the days of their troubles. For as the Jews say where-soever this word (Selah) is, it doth admonish and stir up the reader, to mark what was said before it; for it is a word always put after very notable sentences.

Then followeth the rest of such pains and troubles, as this Prophet suffered whilst the Lord laid his cross upon him, after this sort:

Ver. 4. *Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so feeble I cannot speak.*

Before he said his spirit could take no consolation, which was a grief unspeakable, for no thought is able to comprehend the anguish of the mind, much less is the tongue able to express it. But now he sheweth a further increase of discomfort, and saith, that the terror of his mind was such, that he was not only comfortless, but the Lord also, to the increase of sorrow, kept sleep from him. And as the greatness of God's punishment suffered him not to sleep; so would it not permit him to speak, but made him speechless: such was the great punishment of God towards him.

Here is the tyranny and violence of sin to be perceived and seen, which is first in this verse to be noted. It taketh all mirth from the spirit, and bringeth in heaviness and discomfort. It taketh away sleep, and placeth for it tediousness and sor-

rowful watch. It taketh away also the speech of the tongue, and leaveth the man mute and speechless.

If sin can do such painful things in the body and soul, whilst they be yet conjoined together, and there is hope of remission: what can it do, when the one is in the earth, and the other in hell, separated, or else both of them conjoined again in the resurrection of the wicked, where there is no hope of redemption, but assurance of everlasting pain? Besides this, it is to be noted in this verse containing the increase of the Prophet's heaviness, what a precious jewel man or woman hath, that hath a quiet heart and peaceable conscience. For where-soever they be, there be all the members of man and woman wholly bent unto the service and honouring of God. The eyes shall never be turned from their service; neither shall the tongue cease (if it be able to speak) to sound forth always the glory of God, as David saith: "Mine eyes be always towards the Lord." (Psalm xxv.) Again, "I lifted up mine eyes unto the Lord. As the eye of the handmaid attendeth upon her mistress; so our eyes attend upon the Lord." (Psalm cxxiii.) Again, "Mine eyes, Lord, be not proud." (Psalm cxxxii.) And in another Psalm he saith, there should come neither sleep nor slumber in his eyes, until he had provided a place for the ark of God to rest in. In case the spirit be troubled, or in a contempt of God's laws, not liking his holy devices, the eyes be either troubled with overmuch watch (as in this Psalm we see), or else bent to see vanity, the lusts and concupiscence of the flesh and the world. Wherefore David prayed the Lord to turn his eyes, that they looked not upon vanity. (Psalm cxix. Prov. xxvii.) For the eye of him that hath not a right spirit, is insatiable. And many times the eye (where

the spirit is without the favour of God) abhorreth God's own good gifts. As the eyes of the Israelites loathed manna in the desert, saying, "Our eyes see nothing but manna" (Numb. xi.); even so the tongue also of the godly-spirited man will sound the glory of God, as King David used his tongue, and will not hinder it by naughty speech. (Psalm xxxv. xxxix. lxxi.)

If the spirit be void of God's fear, then doth it speak of malice, falsely to slander the good, as King David doth declare; or else for trembling or quaking, it can speak nothing at all, as ye may perceive by the Prophet Asaph in this place. (Psalm vi. xii. xiv. cxl.) He that will therefore consider accordingly the greatness of this fear in the spirit, and how it taketh away the office of every member external, doubtless must labour to have the spirit that David prayeth, in this sort: "Create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew in me a right spirit!" (Psalm li.) In the which verse the Prophet prayeth, first, to have such an heart as, by faith in Christ, may be clean and purged from sin; and next, to have a certain and sure spirit, that doubteth nothing of God's promises towards him. For such a spirit within the body of man or woman, maketh the heart so joyful, that no sorrow can molest it; and it strengtheneth so every member, that they will be given to nothing so much as to the service of God. But if the spirit be wicked, doubtless the outward members will serve nothing but iniquity; if it be troubled, the outward members cannot be quiet. For as the soul giveth life to the body; so doth the virtue of God in the soul, draw the outward parts of the body unto the obedience of virtue. And contrariwise, the vice of the soul draweth the members of the body unto the service of sin and iniquity. (Rom. vii. viii. xii.) And as the ears and eyes of man were

made by God, to be instruments to hear and see God's will and pleasure, and by them (since man fell in Paradise) knowledge might come into the soul and spirit of man, by hearing God's word preached, and seeing his sacraments ministered; so by them abused in hearing and seeing of sin and abomination, there entereth into the soul much vile filthiness and transgression. (Rom. x.) The Prophet Asaph, therefore, doth admonish us to beware that we bring not our spirits into discomfort by sin and transgression of God's laws; for if we do, whether the offence be done in the spirit, by the evil that naturally is in it, by original sin, by the temptation of the devil, or by the means of any member of the body; doubtless the trouble of the spirit shall not only take away the office of the members (as ye see in this place the speech of the tongue, and the closing of the eyes, be taken away): but at the length also, God shall make the same body and the same members to rise again at the general resurrection, and they shall suffer with the wicked spirit eternal pains. (1 Cor. xv.) Let this doctrine, therefore, teach all men to know and feel the cruelty of sin, that so painfully unquieteth both body and soul; and think that if these grudgings, discomforts, terrors, and fears be so great, that death itself is more tolerable and easy to bear; how much more intolerable and unspeakable be the pains of hell, which God hath ordained for all impenitent sinners? (Isa. lxvi. Matt. xxv.)

After this verse of trouble and anguish, where we see sleep taken from the eyes, and speech from the tongue, followeth next how these great sorrows were mollified and somewhat diminished.

Ver. 5. I have considered the days of old, and the years that be past.

Ver. 6. *In the night I called to remembrance my song, and communed with mine own heart : and my spirit searched diligently.*

I did (saith the Prophet), in this great discomfort and heaviness, consider with myself the times and worlds of old, wherein the Lord had holpen and delivered my fathers before my time, from such troubles as I am in, and also from greater. And in the night, while I was sleepless, I remembered that many times I lauded and exalted the goodness of God in my psalms and hymns, giving him thanks for his great mercy and goodness used towards his church at all times ; and in remembering God's accustomed clemency and pity, my spirit was much given to debate things.

Out of these two verses we may note divers doctrines for our consolation in the days of our trouble. And the first (after my mind) shall be concerning the two brightnesses and the two darknesses in the word of God. The one brightness is in the letter outwardly, and the other brightness is in the spirit and heart of the reader of the Scripture. This brightness or clarity of the letter is this, when by reading, hearing, or thinking of God's word, men learn and know that God made all things, and that he preserveth all things, and that Jesus Christ his only Son is the Mediator between God and man, and that he pacified God's just ire against man by his bitter death and passion. Also he knoweth by the external histories of the Scripture, that God hath delivered many times his people from dangers and perils in manner impossible to be holpen.

This clarity and brightness of the Scripture, although it be necessary, yet it is not sufficient ; for it standeth alone in bare and naked knowledge, which before God saveth not, neither illuminateth the man

that hath the knowledge in a sufficient clarity and brightness of faith, and of God's promises due in Christ unto faith. As we may see how the children of Israel had the external clarity and brightness of God's promises unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that they and their posterity should inherit the land of Canaan, that flowed with all plenty and abundance (Gen. xii. xiii. xv. xvi. xvii.) ; yet, notwithstanding, such as came out of Egypt, for the most part perished in the desert and wilderness. (Numb. xiv.) The Pharisees and learned men amongst the Jews had the clearness and brightness of Christ's coming, and of the place he should be born in, and told in that part the truth unto Herod. (Mic. v. Matt. ii.) ; yet did they, for all this knowledge and clarity, abhor Christ when he came, and put him to death most wrongfully. The people in like sort saw an external brightness in Christ, that by his miracles and wonders they thought him worthy to be made a king ; and yet, for all this, they cried out against him, " Crucify him, crucify him." The devil himself said he knew who Christ was, the Son of the Most Highest ; and yet, for all this knowledge and clearness, shall he never be saved. (Matt. xxvii. Mark, xv. Luke, xx. John, xix. John, vi. Luke, iv.) And Christ himself also perceived that this external brightness was amongst a great many that called him Lord, Lord : yet notwithstanding he said, they should not enter into the joys of heaven. (Matt. vii.) So likewise be there very many at this present time, that see the clarity and brightness of Christ outwardly in the letter, and yet follow it not here in living, neither shall they have the effect of their knowledge in the life to come : for their clearness is only knowledge, without feeling or practice of the brightness inwardly, which serveth more stripes than obscurity or darkness doth. (Luke, xii.)

There is another clarity or brightness, which is an inward understanding and spiritual knowledge and sight of God's truth, which no man hath but he that is possessed with the Spirit of God, that whatsoever he readeth in God's word himself, or heareth preached of other men, he understandeth it, and consenteth unto it gladly and willingly. As for example: God spake unto Adam, and his words made him afraid, so that he trembled for fear. (Gen. iii.) Christ spake unto Paul, and he fell down flat, and could not abide the peril of Christ's voice. (Acts, ii.) So that as the law rebuked sin in the voice and letter, it wrought also rebuke and discomfort in the hearts of Adam and Paul, and made them afraid inwardly, as the voice and letter was terrible outwardly. Wherefore they had not only an external clearness of God's hatred against sin, but also an internal sight and feeling of the same, as the Scripture doth record.

The like is also in the promises of God, when they be preached or read, that promise remission of sin. The inward clarity and brightness of the same is to feel privately every man and woman in his own conscience (through faith in Christ), that the same promises do appertain and belong unto himself. As the Prophet Habakkuk saith: "The just man liveth by his own faith." (Hab. ii. Rom. i.) Also when Christ said unto the woman of Canaan, that it was not good to cast the bread that appertained to the children unto dogs, she said, "Yes, Lord; for the dogs do eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." (Matt. xv.) And so doth Christ himself use the brightness of his promises to Mary Magdalen: "Thy sins be forgiven thee" (Luke, vii.); applying the clearness of the letter unto the inward comfort of her soul.

The same is likewise marvellously expressed in the common creed, where every man saith, he believeth

in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and that he believeth the remission of sins ; meaning, that whosoever saith his creed, should see and feel in his soul the clarity and brightness of his salvation, that is contained in the letter and words of the creed. But this clearness is not seen of all men, nor yet of the most part of men, as Christ declareth : “ Many be called, and few chosen.” (Matt. xx.) Many say, Lord, Lord, and few do the Lord’s will. (Matt. vii.) Therefore Christ saith marvellously concerning the clarity and brightness of God’s word inwardly, in St. Luke : “ Blessed be they that hear the word of God, and keep it” (Luke, ii.) : by the which words he declareth, that many hear and see the outward light and truth of God’s word, but very few there be that see the inward light and profit thereof. Of this is learned what the cause is that Christians bear the name of Christ, and yet be not Christ’s indeed ; because a great many be contented with the name, and few do understand what the name truly and verily containeth in it.

And as there is in the Scripture this double brightness, whereof the one lieth in the letter, and many see what it meaneth by the external word, and the other lieth in the meaning of the letter, and is perceived only by such as have the Spirit of God ; so are there two kinds and sorts of darkness and obscurity in the Scripture ; the one in the letter, and the other in the sense and taking of the letter. The outward obscurity is to be seen in such as contemn the word of God, and will not read it nor hear it : as the Turks and heathen, and also the common sort that bear the name of Christ, be christened in Christ’s name, and outwardly be taken to be very Christians indeed, and yet they know not so much as the letter of Christ’s laws, that prescribeth them what they should do, and what they should not do. And this

obscurity is a brutish, beastly, and external darkness. The other is obscurity or darkness inwardly in the text : for although the letter be well known, and the sound thereof seemeth to be plain, yet the sense is not so common nor so manifest as the letter soundeth.

Whereupon St. Paul bindeth all men in the understanding of the letter unto the analogy and proportion of faith, that no one place be taken contrary to many places : whereof was gathered the abridgment of our common Creed, accepted at all times and of all Christian men for an infallible truth ; so that whosoever believed it, was accounted a good Christian man. And of this obscurity of the Scripture in the sense and spirit is risen this troublesome contention about transubstantiation of bread and wine in the sacrament of Christ's body and blood ; for the ungodly sort would have no substance of bread and wine to remain in the sacrament, and yet a corporal presence of body and blood, contrary not only to the articles of our faith, that telleth us he is in heaven, and shall abide there until he come to judge the quick and the dead, but also contrary to many other places of the Scripture. (Matt. xxvi. Matt. xiv. Luke, xxii. 1 Cor. x. xi. Acts, iii. Coloss. iii.)

And this is no new thing, to have and record the text and letter of the Scripture, and yet lack the effect and the very consolation of the Scripture indeed. For here in these two verses the Prophet Asaph doth record and remember God's doings mercifully in time past, and yet taketh no more consolation thereof than he findeth in the bark of the letter, or in the rehearsal of the histories. And the same he doth of his own psalms and hymns, whereof he maketh mention ; and yet by the same mean his spirit is brought into no further consideration of God's truth than it was before, with much heaviness and sorrow, as the verses following do declare : so that in the af-

fiction of the spirit he could repeat and call to his remembrance the truth, how God had dealt mercifully with his forefathers, but felt not at that present the like mercy of God towards himself; neither could he see nor feel for his consolation the cure and succour of God's promises, which he saw in others, as all the elect of God at length shall doubtless feel. As it is said by the Prophet, "As we have heard, so have we seen;" and at length (as the Psalm saith) he felt himself. (Psalm xlviii.) Whether he wrote the Psalm of his own sorrows and troubles, or of the sorrows and troubles of the Israelites, it maketh no matter; let every man in that case use his own judgment, so that he mark the doctrine of the Psalm.

There is to be noted of these verses also this doctrine, that whatsoever trouble the spirit was brought unto, whatsoever watch had taken his eyes, and whatsoever vehemency of disease had taken his speech from him; yet under all these crosses he cursed not God, nor grudged against his plagues, but, as a man contented, gave himself to record and to call to memory how God was wont to be unto men afflicted, and took account how in times past he had spent his years, and found that he had made certain psalms or hymns to the glory of God, and to the praise of his holy name. Of the which we learn not only patience in the time of trouble and persecution, but also how to spend our youth and transitory life in doing or making some things that may be records and remembrances when we be gone, that we lived here to serve God, and not to serve ourselves. And it is a great help and no small consolation for a man that is in trouble and heaviness to think that he in this life before sought the glory of God; and that testimony of conscience is more worth in the time of trouble, than all other men's deeds for him. Not in that his seeking God's glory and setting forth of

the same can be his gage and ransom before God, but because it is a very testimony, that God once loved him, and gave him of his blessed Spirit, to indite something to God's praise and honour. And as godly psalms and virtuous hymns be testimonies of a virtuous spirit; so be wanton and adulterous ballads, records of a vicious and sinful spirit. And as the remembrance of good and virtuous works in the time of sickness and trouble be joyful and comfortable, so is the remembrance of wicked doings sorrowful and painful.

We be therefore taught by this Prophet to be circumspect and wary, how we accumulate and heap upon our souls infidelity, and the wicked works thereof; for as they be the only cause of trouble, so do they not only work trouble, but also increase trouble, and augment the heaviness of the spirit and pains of the body, as is declared marvellously by the grave and profound sentences following; wherein he declareth what it was that his spirit searched so diligently for. It was this:

Ver. 7. Will the Lord absent himself for ever, and will he be no more entreated?

Ver. 8. Is his mercy clean gone for ever, and is his promise come utterly to an end for evermore?

Ver. 9. Hath God forgotten to be gracious for ever, and will he shut up his loving kindness in displeasure?

Ver. 10. And I said, it is mine own weakness, but the right hand of God can change these things.

These verses declare what minds and cogitations do happen to men that be in sickness or trouble, and how grievous they be unto the patient.

Out of these verses first we see a common rehearsal of the great terror and fear of the feeling of God's displeasure and anger towards the woful spirit for sin.

The first meditation of the sinful spirit was this:

“ Will the Lord absent himself for ever ?” This may be understood two manner of ways ; for this English word “ ever” hath two meanings in the Hebrew tongue : sometimes it is taken for continuance and time everlasting ; sometimes for certain years, and the life of men. If it be taken in this place for time everlasting, the sorrows of the Prophet were the greater, when he revolved with his spirit that God justly for sin might cast him into everlasting pains, the remembrance whereof is greater pain than the mortal death of the body. If this word “ ever” be taken for a certain time, and the life of man, then meaneth the Prophet thus : “ Will God as long as I live absent himself, and thus continue me in heaviness of spirit and sorrows as long as I live ?” Which sense soever be taken, there be profitable things to be learned of it. But I suppose the latter sense to be the better for divers causes : first in this, that the Psalm containeth the complaint and prayer of the Prophet, a man of God, that cannot be brought to this desperation, that he should be cast away for ever from the favour of God unto eternal pains. And the text that saith, “ It is mine own infirmity, and the right hand of the Lord can change this,” doth bear with this latter sense and explanation. For the words be of great weight, and of marvellous wisdom and consolation, and do declare, that although the Prophet felt the judgment of God against sin, and was in a marvellous terror and fear with the horror and sight of his sins ; yet the Spirit of God did testify with his spirit, that he was the child of God, and that it was a pain and punishment of the soul and body, and not a desperation and thorough casting away and absenting of God’s mercy. (Rom. viii.) For the very elect of God be so chosen, so ordained, so preserved and kept, that nothing is able to take them out of God’s hand. (John, vi. x.) For the godly men in the Scrip-

ture did rejoice, with the assurance of God's certain promise, and did not presume to do evil, as St. Paul in sundry places doth give testimony : once to the Romans, where he felt and perceived the filthiness of sin, and the just judgment of God against the same; as it appeareth by his woful cry and complaint, " Oh ! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body subject unto death ? " (Rom. vii.) He felt (as we may perceive) the heavy burden and weight of God's displeasure, and yet in the midst of terror and fear he stayed assuredly in the mercy of God through Christ. And the same he writeth also to the Corinthians, and to his disciple Timothy, that his death was at hand, and that he knew (although his quarrel were never so good) that he of himself was a sinner, and by sin worthy rejection and casting away from God; yet he said that Christ had in keeping for him a crown of justice, which he should assuredly receive at the day of his death. (1 Cor. xv. 2 Tim. iv.)

God is contented that his chosen people shall suffer and bear the burden and heaviness of temptation and fear of everlasting pain, as Adam did first in paradise (Gen. iii.), David did many times (Psalm xlii. xliii.), Job (chap. iii.), and others, yea Christ himself, that said his soul was heavy even unto death, which made him sweat both water and blood. (Matt. xxvi.) But these temptations and terrors shall never overcome and cast away the person that hath his faith in Christ : for none is able to take his sheep out of his hand. (John, vii.) Yet God withdraweth his hand many times, and suffereth his to be tempted and to be comfortless, and as it were clean overthrown : not that indeed their election can be altered, or they themselves left comfortless until the end of their lives, but for a time, as we may see by Job, who spake as horrible words, and as desperately as might

be. (Job, iii. xlii.) Yet see in the end of his book, and mark what a joyful outgoing his grievous temptations had. What pitiful cries were these of Christ our Saviour upon the cross ! “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ” Yet the end was, “ Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Matt. xxvii. Mark, xv. Luke, xxii. John, xx. Psalm xxxiv. Acts, xiv.)

It is written, that we must enter into heaven by many troubles. Now, of all troubles, the trouble of the mind and of the spirit is the greatest. Who then can enter into heaven without such troubles ? Doubtless, no man ; for the judgment of God must begin at his house, as St. Peter saith ; that is to say, none shall in this life more feel God’s displeasure for sin in the spirit, nor suffer more adversity in the body, than such as be of God’s own household and very elect. (1 Pet. iv. Prov. xii. Heb. xii.) Wherefore we be admonished, in the troubles and sorrows that this Prophet Asaph sustained in his soul that could not rest, and in his body that could not sleep nor speak, that good men be not free from adversity, and that adversities (be they never so great) shall not separate men from God for ever, but for a time he punisheth sin, and hideth the consolation of God from us : as the Scripture saith : “ For a time, a little while, I have forsaken thee ; but I will gather thee together in wonderful mercies. In a short time of my wrath, I hid my face awhile from thee, but I will have mercy upon thee for ever, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.” (Isaiah, iv.)

All men that shall perfectly know and feel the certainty of God’s promises in this life, and enjoy them in the life to come, shall be troubled with some pain of doubtfulness of them, before they come to perfection. For as by sin death entered into the flesh, and also the flesh is subject unto sickness and adver-

sity; so is there entered into the soul and powers thereof, by reason of sin, great imperfection. (Gen. iii. Rom. v.) As the mind of all men is burdened with ignorance, the heart with contumacy, and the will with frowardness (Rom. vii. viii. Eph. ii.); so that as they be before regeneration and knowledge of God in all godly matters stark blind, very obstinate, and naturally altogether froward (Psalm liii.); even so after regeneration and the knowledge of God they continually resist and fight against the spirit, not only of man, in whom these powers dwell, but also against the Spirit of God, that teacheth and leadeth the spirit of man to eternal salvation. (Rom. viii. John, iii.) So that it is not man that is able to overcome the wickedness of his own soul. (Philip. i. ii.) And therefore seeing life through grace dwelt in a body naturally full of sin, St. Paul said, "I do live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. ii.) So this Prophet Asaph seemeth in words to be stark dead from grace, but it was not for ever (Psalm lxxxviii.); for he felt the Spirit of God, that told him that such heavy and ungodly thoughts of his spirit came of his own infirmity, and that God's right hand could alter and change them. And this is the difference between the affliction of the godly and ungodly, as it is wonderfully set forth in the Psalm next before this saving one, where it is said, "There is a cup in the Lord's hand full of red wine, and he poureth out of it, but the wicked shall drink the dregs thereof, and the ungodly of the earth shall receive the bottom of it." (Psalm lxxv.) The cup in the Scripture is taken many times for adversity, whereof God filleth a quantity and a certain measure unto all his elect and chosen servants; but the wicked shall drink the bottom and all, and never come to rest nor ease. (Matt. xxvi. Mark, xvi. Isaiah, lxvi. Matt. xxv.)

Out of this temptation we may learn how foolish

and how impatient we be. When God sendeth troubles, we think such to be best at ease that want them ; whereas the Lord's Book declareth, that it is necessary, and also very expedient, that we should have them. (Prov. iii. Rev. iii. Heb. xii.) Again, there is to be noted how that the Prophet in the cogitations of his mind maketh no mention of the grief of the body, whereof he spake before at the beginning of his troubles. For in the second and fourth verse he declareth how he held up his hands all night, and cried with his voice until he was speechless, and lay waking, and could not sleep. Of the which sorrows now he maketh no rehearsal, but saith, his spirit was searching and inquisitive, whether God would absent himself for ever, with divers like interrogatories of God's nature, as follow in the Psalm. Whereof we learn the vileness of our own nature, and also the treason and subtlety of the devil : for as long as we sin, we have such delight and pleasure therein, as though it were but a play to transgress and break God's holy commandments. But when sickness and trouble lay the wicked body a-bed, and make it weak and feeble, our conscience is waked by the law of God, and we put in such terror and fear, that nothing can quiet us. (Rom. viii. Gal. ii. iii.) Also as long as we do sin, the devil beareth us in hand that God is so merciful (do what we will), that he will not be angry ; but when sickness or death invadeth, then turneth the devil his tale, and persuadeth with us that God is only extreme just, and nothing at all merciful. And this grief of the mind is so sore and vehement, that all the pains of the body seem nothing in comparison thereof, as we see in this place by the holy Prophet Asaph, that was very sore unquieted in his body, yet did his spirit make no account of it, but still he stayed and staggered, trembling and quaking at the heaviness and

sorrow of the spirit, that could not feel, for the time, of his trouble, any certainty or consolation in the promises of God.

Of this we be admonished, that whatsoever we have, if God's favour lack, we have nothing able to rejoice us. And of the other side, if we lack all things, and have assuredly God's favour, there is nothing able to make us heavy and sorrowful : as we see King Saul, having a noble kingdom, and lacking the favour of God, was always unquieted. Poor David, having the grace and favour of God, was quiet and contented with all things, saying, "If God will, he may restore me ; if he will not, his will be done." (1 Sam. xvi. xxiv. 2 Sam. xiv. xv.)

The assurances of God's promises made Paul glad to die (2 Tim. iv.) : and the mistrust and desperation of God's promises made Judas weary to live. (Matt. xxvi.) The certainty of God's truth made St. Stephen quietly to die, in the assurance of eternal life (Acts, vii.) The uncertainty and doubtfulness of God's mercy caused Saul to die in the fear of eternal death. (1 Sam. xxxi.) Riches of this world be treasures much esteemed and made of, friends and lovers much sought for and warily kept, and health of body highly regarded and preserved with much care ; yet, if the soul be destitute of the assurance of God's grace, the rest seem to be of no value at all. As we see, Saul in his kingdom, with riches, strength, and friendship, yet his mind vexed, still in evil spirit, and God's spirit departed, his sorrows were incomparable. (1 Sam. xvi.) So that we learn, that not only the goods appertaining to the body be nothing worth, where the spirit wanteth the grace of God, but also where the spirit is troubled, the goods of the body be little felt, and nothing passed of, as we see by this Prophet in this Psalm.

The other part of his cogitations in the time of his

sickness was this : “ Will he be no more entreated ? ” This grievous temptation, whether God would be entreated to forgive sin any more, may have two understandings : the one generally, and the other particularly ; generally in this sort, whether God, once offended, will be merciful and forgive, or not ? particularly, whether God, whose nature is merciful, will forgive the private man, that seeketh by faith mercy ; as he hath in time past forgiven all men that asked it with repentance in faith ? The first sense and taking of the text generally, is marvellous wicked and blasphemous, to think that God, once offended with any man, will never forgive again. Of this opinion was Cain, when he said his sins were greater than they might be forgiven (Gen. iv.) ; and he thought God would be no more entreated, because he judged his fault greater than the mercy of God that forgiveth faults. And wheresoever this judgment of the spirit is, this sentence is verified : God will be entreated no more.

And as every man that is privately thus minded, that his own sins be greater than can be forgiven, even so hath he the like mind and judgment also of all other men’s sins that be like unto his, thinking them to be greater than they may be forgiven : for he that despaireth of his own faults, cannot think well that other men’s faults as great as his own be remissible. As Judas, that hanged himself for betraying of Christ, could not think well of Peter that denied Christ, but judged of Peter as he did of himself, saying, God will be entreated no more. (Matt. xxvii. 3xvi.)

Of this wicked judgment of God’s mercy, whether he will be entreated any more of a sinner, after that he hath sinned, I will speak no more : but they that lust to read how horrible a thing it is, may have many Psalms that do declare it ; namely, Psalm x. and lxxiii.

In the one of them it is said by the wicked, that God hath forgotten the earth, and careth neither for the godly life of the godly and virtuous, nor the ungodly life of the ungodly and wicked. And in the other Psalm they make a doubt, whether there be any knowledge in God of man and of his life, or not; but these sorts of people be too horrible and blasphemous, and not to be rehearsed or much spoken of.

The other sense of this place that is more particular, is the better sense for the argument and meaning of the Psalm; that is, to ask whether God will be entreated no more, as touching the remission of his own sin; or else whether God will be no more merciful to help him out of trouble, that specially and particularly suffereth the trouble. And this question so asked is very common and familiar to the Christians, and putteth them to great trouble and heaviness. As we may see that this Prophet Asaph considereth the years before him, and what God did to his elders, and found that they received remission of their sins, and great benefits in this world at God's hand. So do a great number of men, in hearing and reading the Scripture of God, see and perceive the remission of many men's sins, and how mercifully God dealt with them; yet when they feel their own sin, and suffer their own cross and trouble, they have much ado, and with great difficulty do they believe that God will be as good unto them, being private sinners and privately afflicted, as he was unto the great number of those, of whom they read in the Scripture, that God forgave them their sins, and preserved them in most horrible and dangerous troubles.

Therefore, this is a common wisdom and daily experimented sentence: "When other men be sick, we can give good counsel patiently to bear it." When other men be afflicted and troubled, we can speak of many means to quiet them. When they be

in any mistrust of God's promises, we can comfort them with many arguments of faith : but most commonly, if we be sick ourselves, troubled, or in mistrust of God's promises, we can ease or comfort ourselves very little. And good cause why ; for God that giveth of his own gift and only free liberality, wisdom, knowledge, learning, and consolation, giveth also the grace that the said virtues may work their operation, and expel the infirmities and diseases, wherefore these wisdoms and virtues were ordained. As it is marvellously noted of St. Paul : " I have planted, and Apollos hath watered, but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. iii.)

The word of God is a means to teach truth, and to condemn falsehood ; to place virtue, and to remove vice ; to give consolation, and to banish and put away diffidence and distrust, but God giveth and worketh the effect thereof. (Rom. i. Matt. x. xxviii.) Meat is made to preserve the body, but if God giveth not strength, it misseth the purpose. (Acts, xvi.) The horse and man be means to overcome, but in battle God giveth the victory. (Prov. xxi.) The preacher preacheth God's word, but God openeth and teacheth the mystery thereof : man heareth, but God giveth the understanding. Asaph remembered God's works, and had in mind his own godly Psalms, but God must give the consolation : he saw the truth, and knew that God was faithful ; but the joy and profit thereof lay in the distribution and gift of God, as we may well perceive by this sorrowful interrogatory : " Will he be entreated no more ?"

Of this part we learn how we ought, when we read or hear God's promises for our salvation, to pray, and how necessary a thing this prayer is that godly men made in the Scripture : " Lord, help my incredulity ; Lord, increase our faith." (Mark, ix.) The poor man that heard and saw Christ's mercy and liberality

in healing of others, desired also health for his own child. Christ said, if he believed, all things were possible. The poor man said, "I believe, Lord; help mine unbelief." (Luke, xvii.)

The Apostles, when they heard Christ speak of forgiveness of one to the other, they said, "Increase our faith, good Lord:" as though they had said, Except thou give us strength to believe and credit thy godly lessons, we shall take no commodity nor profit by them. Therefore let the preacher of God, the reader of God's word, the hearer of God's word, and the thinker upon the same, many times before, also whilst they be speaking, thinking, reading, or hearing of God's word, pray in their spirits, that the word of God may work in them the thing, wherefore the word was instituted and appointed of God; or else we shall be (as St. Paul saith) always learners, and yet never come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Tim. iii.)

And I do verily think, and am truly persuaded, that for lack of earnest and continual prayer, with lifting up of my heart unto God, whilst I preached his most holy word unto the people, God judged me not worthy to see such fruits of my labours as I hoped for. And for this, that the people did not heartily pray to understand God's pleasure by his word preached, they may be accounted unworthy of such salvation, as God did offer them by his word, and the true preaching of his mysteries. Let all men therefore pray to God in Christ, that they may be the better for the hearing, recording, remembering, or reading of God's word: for notwithstanding they have amongst them the Book of God, yet shall they be troubled (without God's singular grace) with one of these two evils: either to mock and scorn at the Scripture, caring not whether they learn it or no; or else, when they have learned it, to doubt whether

it be true or no. And then follow these questions : “ Will God absent himself for ever ? ” and, “ Will God be no more entreated ? ” with such other doubts as do follow in this Psalm : with much heaviness unto the spirit where such demands rest and have place.

Then followeth the third demand by this troubled Prophet, “ Is his mercy clean gone for ever ? ”

Here in this demand first be two things to be noted : the one declaring a fault in the Prophet's faith, and the other expressing a verity in the Prophet's knowledge. The fault in his faith was to doubt or to stand in a mammering of God's mercy, which is most sure, and endureth for ever and ever ; and to ask this question, whether his mercy were clean gone for ever ? The verity of his knowledge was to judge and say, that it was his mercy that forgave sins, and not his or any other men's merits that would deserve the pardoning of sin : as ye may see how sinful Saul for his sin thought to have appeased God with sacrifice (1 Sam. xv.), and the proud Pharisee with his pretended good works. (Luke, xviii.) But here in this knowledge, that the Prophet complained of the departure of God's mercy, is set forth, that only mercy appeaseth God's ire in Christ for the sin of man. And what works soever be done, except God's mercy pardon the sin, they all can neither please God, nor quiet the conscience and troubled spirit of him that doth the works. (Exod. iv. Deut. viii. Psalm xxxiii. li. lvi. lxxxv. cxxx. cxliii.) : as it may be seen in the example of St. Peter, and the rest of the Apostles. When St. Peter walked upon the sea coming towards Christ, and felt the wind strong and tempestuous, he began to fear : and when he began to sink, he cried, “ Lord, save me.” And the Lord put forth his hand and took him, and said

unto him, "Thou of little faith, why doubtest thou?" (Matt. xiv.)

Here we see, if God did help us no more of his mercy, than our own merits deserved, or else no more than the gifts of God, faith, hope, and charity, as they be qualities in us, we should surely perish. Therefore this place of the Prophet Asaph, where he demanded this question, whether God's mercy be gone for ever? doth teach us, that of all things we should be most assured of this, that only mercy is the help of man's troubles and damnation. But as I said before, there were two manner of clarities and brightness in the word of God, so now I say, there is two manner of mercies of God mentioned in the Scripture: the outward mercy is in the letter which men read and sing every day, and speak and talk of; but the other is inward.

When that men cannot feel God's mercy in their conscience, as they hear it spoken of, and as they read it in the book, they be troubled and full of anguish and pain; and as long as they be in this case, without God's mercy, they can do nothing that pleaseth God, nor content themselves. But as soon as the spirit is assured, and feeleth that God for his mercy doth forgive and forget the iniquity that the spirit and body have committed and done against God, it rejoiceth and is so glad, that it will do nothing but that, which pleaseth and is acceptable unto God, and in Christ shall content and quiet his own conscience. As for example: Adam, before he inwardly felt the mercy of God promised in Christ to forgive and remit his sin and offence, in what heaviness was the poor man? He hid himself, and could not abide the voice of the living God (Gen. iii.), for he felt that his doings pleased neither God nor himself. But when grace had assured him of God's

mercy, he fell in the spirit to quietness: for where the Spirit of God testifieth and beareth record with the spirit of man, that he is the child of God, there is joy and consolation, with this joyful song and melody: "Father, Father." (Rom. viii.) So that wheresoever this song is felt in the spirit, there are such joys as no tongue can express, as all the book of Solomon's Ballads marvellously doth declare.

And where the mercy of God is not, there is either the abomination of sin, and continuance therein, without any fear or grudge of conscience at all, or else such heaviness of spirit, that desperation quaileth and oppresseth the spirit for ever. Yet shall the spirit and soul of man feel this for a time, while God hideth his merciful face: "Is his mercy clean gone for ever?" which cogitations of the mind be full bitter and sorrowful, as all men of God do know that have felt them, and as the Prophet declareth in the process of his Psalm, in this sort: "And is his promise come utterly to an end for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? And will he shut up his loving kindness in displeasure?" These demands and questions of his own mind and spirit that was troubled, be no more in effect, than troubles that he named before. But in this that he calleth the trouble by so many names, it declareth that his spirit was for the time so disquieted, that the pains in manner could not well be named and expressed. As it is to be seen always when the mind of man is brought into an excellency and profoundness of mirth or sorrow, then it is so ravished with the vehemency of them both, that the tongue is not able to express the inward joy nor the inward sorrow, as it is to be seen as well in profane writers as in the holy word of God. Read ye the 18th Psalm of King David, which he sung to the Lord when he was quit and delivered from all his enemies, and ye shall see with what

shift and copy of words he used to name God, and to express what he thought of God in his heart, and with what metaphors he expresseth the strength of God, that overcame all his enemies. The Psalm is to be read and marked. Again, read ye these Psalms, xlii. xliii. where ye shall perceive the prayer of David wherein is described a vehement agony and most bitter battle between faith and desperation; and there mark what words he hath found out, to express the sorrows of his heart, that was so sore put in doubt by desperation and weakness of faith: "The hart (saith he) being wounded, was never more desirous to come to the water, than my soul desireth to come to thee, O God!" And at length, when he can find no more words to utter the pensiveness of his heart, he turneth his words inward to his own soul, and asketh why she is so heavy and sad. Ye may see also the very same joyful and sorrowful spirits in the Ballads of Solomon, and in the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet. In the one it seemeth, that the soul annexed unto Christ is in such joy as the tongue cannot express it; and in the other, for sin the soul is afflicted in such sort, that it cannot tell how to express the heaviness thereof.

There is to be considered also in these demands of the Prophet, that he made to himself in his spirit (as the text saith, he revolved the matter with his own spirit), this doctrine, how easy a thing it is to teach and comfort other men, and how hard a thing it is for a man to teach and comfort himself in the promises of God. St. Paul found fault therewithal, and said to the Jew: "Thou teachest another man, and teachest not thyself." (Rom. ii.) And Judas went forth with the eleven other of his fellows, to teach God's mercy in Christ unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but he neither followed his own doctrine, nor yet took any comfort of remission of sins in the pro-

mises of God, but hanged himself desperately. (Matt. x. xxvii.) Wherefore it is very expedient for every man and woman that hath learned, and doth know the truth of God, to pray that they themselves may follow the truth; and for such as know and teach others the consolation of the Scriptures of God, that they may with knowledge of them feel them indeed, and with speaking of them to others for their learning, they may speak them to themselves for their own edifying.

But doubtless it is an easy matter for a man to speak of comfort and consolation to others, but a hard thing to feel it himself. Virtue is soon spoken of to other men's instructions, but the putting thereof in practice and use, is very hard; yea, not only in the scholar that is taught, but also in the master that instructeth. Beware of despair, can every man say; but to eschew despair in great conflicts of the mind, is an hard matter. Read the book of the Psalms well, and ye shall see the experience thereof to be most certain and true. In the 62d Psalm ye shall have this commandment to all men: "Trust ye always in Him, ye people:" yet when it came to the trial in himself, ye may see with what heaviness and great trouble of mind he came to the trust in the Lord. Ye may learn by these Psalms indicted by King David, that easily he taught God's religion, and how men should put their trust in the Lord (Psalm xli. xliii.), and yet how hard it was to do and practise the thing himself that he taught unto others. Asaph also declareth the same; for in the 73d Psalm he teacheth what men should think and judge in adversity, that God would be good unto Israel. But in this Psalm (lxxvii.), he himself being under the rod and persecution of God, is come to questioning and demanding: "Will God absent himself for ever? Will he be no more entreated? Is his mercy

clean gone for ever?" with many other demands, declaring unspeakable troubles and difficulties of the mind, before it be brought to a perfect consent and full agreement unto the promises of God. So that we see the excellent Prophets and most virtuous organs and instruments amongst sinful men knew it was an easy matter to speak of faith and virtue, and yet a very hard thing to practise true faith, and to exercise virtuous living.

St. Paul sheweth the same to the Romans to be in himself (chap. viii.) ; for he had more ado in Christ to get the victory of sin in himself, than to speak of the victory unto others by mouth ; and more ado to mortify and kill the flesh, and to bring it in subjection to the spirit, than to practise the death of the flesh in himself, and to follow the spirit. He spake and uttered with his mouth most godly doctrine, to the destruction of sin ; but with what prayers, tears, and clamours to God, he did the same in himself, read 2 Cor. xii. Rom. xii. viii. 2 Cor. vi. Gal. v. Eph. v.

The old saying is, Knowledge is no burden, and indeed it is a thing easy to be borne ; but to put knowledge in experience, the body and the soul shall find pain and trouble. And yet Christ's words, where he saith, " My yoke is light, and my burden easy" (Matt. xi.), be most true to such as have wrestled with sin, and in Christ got the upper hand. To them I say, the precepts of virtuous living be easy and sweet, as long as the Spirit of God beareth the overhand in them. But when faith waxeth faint, and the flesh strong, then cannot the Spirit of God command nor desire any thing, but both body and soul be much offended with the hearing thereof, and more grieved with the doing of it. (Rom. vii.) St. Peter likewise maketh mention of the same ; for when Christ bade him follow him (meaning that he

should die also for the testimony of his word), he liked not that, but asked Christ what John should do, being, doubtless, in great perplexity; when Christ told him that he should suffer the pains of death. But here are to be noted two things: the one, that as long as affliction is talked of generally, and other men's pains spoken of, so long can every man and woman hear of affliction, yea, and commend the persons that suffered affliction: as we see at this day, all men be contented to hear of the death of Christ, of the martyrdom of his saints, and of the affliction and imprisonment of his godly members: but when the same or like should be experimented and practised by ourselves, we will none of it, we refuse it, and we abhor it: yea so much, that where Christ and those saints (whose names be most common and usual in our mouths) suffered the vilest death that could be devised, we will not suffer as much as the loss of a friend, or the deceivable goods of this unstable and transitory world: so that in the generality we be very godly, and can commend all godly martyrs and sufferers for God's sake; but, alas! in the particularity we be very ungodly, and will follow no martyr, nor suffer at all. Also, as long as we be without danger for Christ's sake; we can speak of great dangers, and say, that we will suffer all extremity and cruelty; but when it cometh to pass, that an enemy to God and his word shall say indeed, Forsake thy religion, or else thou shalt die, as Christ said unto Peter, "When thou art old, another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldest not" (John, xxi.): then a little threatening of another man, stark quaieth this man that said he would suffer all troubles: as Peter saith, if he should lose his life, he would not refuse his Master; but when another, yea, a poor maid, that asked him, whether he were one of Christ's servants,

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and made no mention at all of loss of life or goods, he would not hazard himself to bear so much as the name of Christ's disciple. (Matt. xxvi.)

Thus we see the vileness and frailty of our own nature, how weak we be to suffer indeed, when of necessity we must bear the cross, and can by no means avoid it. How troublesome also it is both to body and soul, this Psalm and place of the Scripture declareth; and therefore in the end of these temptations is put, *Selah*: a word that maketh as it were an outcry against the corrupt nature of man for sin. As St. Paul said: "I know that there dwelleth in my flesh no good thing." (Rom. vii.) To admonish therefore man thereof indeed, and to shew him his own damnation, the word is put there to cause the reader or hearer of the place to mark and bewail the wretchedness thereof. As the Prophet himself doth in the next verse.

THE FOURTH PART.

HOW A MAN TAKETH CONSOLATION IN TIME OF HIS TROUBLE.

Ver. 10. *And I said, this is my infirmity: but these things the right hand of God can change.*

Here are life and death, and the occasions of both, marvellously set forth. He said that it was his infirmity that caused him to question and doubt of God's mercy; whereas he hath disburdened God, and charged himself with sin and doubtfulness: and so much all men see and find in themselves, that damnation is of ourselves, and salvation only of God. (Hosea, xiii.) There is also to be noted in this infirmity, that it occupieth not only the body, but also the soul; for he saith, these cogitations and questions (as touching the doubtfulness of God's mercy) were the devices and acts of his mind; so that both his body and soul were comfortless: and good cause why;

for in both of them were sin and abomination against God. And of these two parts of man, the body and the spirit, came these dubitations of God and of his promises: the which fruits of corruption engender (except sin be forgiven) eternal death.

And here is the wisdom of the flesh seen to be very enmity unto God, working continually the breach of God's commandments, and the destruction of man's salvation, as much as lieth in it. (Rom. viii.) But in the second part of the verse is life, and the occasion thereof, which is a sure trust that God can remove despair, and put in place thereof faith, hope, and sure confidence. And the occasion of this help is not man's merits, but the right hand of God; that is to say, God's power inclined to save man by mercy.

Of this doctrine be certain things to be marked of every reader and hearer of this Psalm. First, in this verse is declared how man taketh consolation in time of his trouble, which is the fourth part of the Psalm; and in the same part the Psalm endeth. He saith, it was his infirmity, that made him to question and demand in his spirit so doubtful things of God, and of his promises: whereof we learnt, that consolation beginneth where sorrow and heaviness are first felt; for the spirit can take no solace by God's promises, until such time as it feeleth by God's law, how sinful it is for the transgression thereof. Therefore Solomon saith: "The just man is the first accuser of himself." (Prov. xviii.) And so doth the Prophet Asaph in this place confess, that these cogitations and profound thoughts against God came of his own infirmity and sin. And the knowledge of a man's own wickedness from the bottom of the heart, although it be a shame to speak or remember the vileness of sin, wherewith the sinner hath most grievously transgressed God's commandments, yet is this knowledge and confession of our sin and iniquity very necessary,

and is, as it were, an induction to the remission thereof, as it is to be seen in this Prophet, and in the Prophet David. For here is first confessed, that all sins in him came of his own infirmity, and all consolation against sin came of God's right hand. And the Prophet David saith, when he was in like trouble for sin, "I determined (saith he) to confess against myself, mine own iniquity; and thou, Lord, forgavest the wickedness of my sin." (Psalm lxxxiv. and xxxii.) But here is to be noted in this, that the confession of sin is, as it were, an induction and beginning of consolation; that confession of sin is not the beginning of consolation, except he that maketh the confession be assured in his heart of God's promises in Christ, that, of mercy in Christ's death, his sins be forgiven; as ye may see in these two Prophets. The one said, "It is mine infirmity that worketh this doubtfulness in my soul." And the other said, "I determined to condemn myself of sin."

Thus far it is death, and an increase of diffidence in God's promises, and an induction to desperation, to feel sin, to bewail sin, to speak of sin, and to remember sin.

But whereas knowledge and confession have a certainty and assurance of God's forgiveness annexed unto it, there is confession and knowledge of sin, partly a beginning of consolation against sin. I call it partly, or as an occasion, because, first of all, God by his word, or by his punishments, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, openeth the soul of the sinner, to see and know his sin, also to tremble and quake at sin, rather than to hate and abhor sin. (Rom. vii. 1 Sam. xv. 2 Sam. xii.) And from these principles and originals cometh the humble and lowly confession of sin, not to man, but unto God; except it be such an open sin done against man, as man

knoweth of, that the sin is committed against. Then must the offender of man also reconcile himself to man that is offended, according to the commandment of God. Therefore we must mark what confession and acknowledging of our own infirmities is (Mark, v. xviii. James, v. Luke, xvii.) : for every confession is not acceptable before God, nor the beginning of consolation, as these examples declare. Judas said openly in the face of the court, where Christ our Saviour was arraigned, that he had offended in betraying innocent blood ; but there followed no faith nor hope of forgiveness (Matt. xxvii. Mark, xv.) : so that for lack of faith in Christ's blood, desperation and hanging of himself ensued his confession : whereby it is evident, that confession of sin without faith is nothing worth, but a testimony of a desperate man's damnation.

King Saul, after long impulsion by the Prophet Samuel, was brought to confess that he had offended in preserving alive Agag, king of the Amalekites, and the fattest of his cattle. (1 Sam. xv.) " I have offended (saith Saul), for I have broken and transgressed the commandment of God." But what followed ? " God's right hand can remedy my sin," as this Prophet Asaph saith (Psalm lxxvii.) ? or " God hath forgiven the iniquity of my sin," as David said (Psalm xxxii.) ? or else, " God be merciful unto me a sinner," as the publican said (Luke, xviii.) ? No ; but this ensueth : " I pray thee (saith Saul to Samuel), bear thou my sin." In this man's confession of sin was not the beginning of consolation, but of mere sorrows ; for his heaviness from that day more and more increased with his sins, until he was slain. (1 Sam. xxxi.) And the cause thereof was this : he would that Samuel, being but a man, should have pardoned his sin ; whereas none can do it but God (Matt. ix. Luke, v. Mark, ii.), as it is notable to be

seen in King David ; for when he said he had offended the Lord, Nathan the Prophet said, " And God hath taken away thy sins." (2 Sam. xii.) Wherein is declared, that the minister can but pronounce to the sinner, that God in Christ forgiveth sin. So that we see Judas' confession of sin was nothing worth, because he found no faith nor trust for the remission thereof, and Saul's confession was of no value, because he trusted and desired consolation at man's hand, and not at God's.

Yet in Saul's confession was something good, in that he confessed (although it were long first and in manner wrested out of his mouth by the Prophet Samuel) his fault to God ; and in that point he did as David did, who said, " I have offended the Lord." (Psalm li. 2 Sam. xii.) And this is to be noted, because now-a-days men be taught to confess their sins to the saints departed, that know not what the outward works of men be upon the earth, much less the inward and sinful cogitation of the heart. (Isaiah, lxiii. Eccles. ix. 1 Kings, viii.) So that in this part the Papists' confession is worse than Saul's, and in the other part it is like : for as Saul trusted to the merits of Samuel, and would have him to bear his sin (1 Sam. xv.) ; so do people trust, that the priest's hand upon their head, and the penance enjoined them by the priests, shall be a clean remission and full satisfaction for all their sin ; but before God, their sins be as much forgiven them as Saul's, that is to say, nothing at all.

But whereas sin is known and confessed from the very heart unto God (1 John, i.), although it be a bitter thing, and also a shameful thing, to feel and bear God's displeasure for sin, the burden whereof is very death, and more grievous than death itself (Psalm cxxx.) ; yet whereas confidence and trust in the mercy of God is annexed with it, there followeth

great consolation and comfort : as it is to be seen in this Prophet, that spake with a strong faith boldly : “ The right hand of God can change these things ; ” so that the latter part of this verse hath more comfort, than the first part hath discomfort. And it is a plain doctrine, that although the sins of man be many and horrible, yet be they fewer and less in estimation many thousand folds, than God’s mercies. (Isaiah, i.) Death is declared in the first part of the verse in this, that man’s infirmity is not only sinful in body and soul, but also doubtful of God’s mercy and holy promises : yet in the second part by grace is set forth life, and clean deliverance from the tyranny of the devil, the servitude of sin, the accusation of the law, and the infirmity of nature, by the strong and mighty power of God, whose mercy in Christ is always ready to help poor afflicted and troubled sinners. (Ezek. xviii. 1 John, i.) After this confession of sin, and the great confidence that the Prophet had in God for his mighty power and mercy’s sake, that was both able by power and ready with will to help and remedy this troubled spirit and great adversities of the Prophet, he goeth forth in the consolation, and taketh yet more and more of God’s benefits, used in times towards such as were afflicted, after this sort.

Ver. 11. *I will remember the works of the Lord, and call to my mind thy wonders of old time.*

Ver. 12. *I will think also of thy works, and my talking shall be of thy doings.*

Ver. 13. *Thy way, O God, is holy ; who is so great a God as our God ?*

Ver. 14. *Thou art the God that doth wonders, and hast declared thy power amongst people.*

Ver. 15. *Thou hast mightily delivered thy people, given the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.*

Ver. 16. *The waters saw thee, O God : the waters*

saw thee, and were afraid : the depths also were troubled.

Ver. 17. *The clouds poured out water, the air thundered, and thine arrows went abroad.*

Ver. 18. *The voice of thy thunder was heard round about ; the lightnings shone upon the ground ; the earth was moved, and shook withal.*

Ver. 19. *Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.*

Ver. 20. *Thou leddest thy people like sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*

Of these means how men take consolation in adversity, that the Prophet now maketh mention of, first, we learn what difference is between the consideration of God's works advisedly and by faith, and the consideration of God's works rashly and without faith; the which diversity is to be seen in this Prophet: for the one part, as touching the remembering of God's works out of faith and in faith, he spake before in the second verse, and in the fourth verse, how that he considered the works and old doings of the Lord when he was troubled. But as ye have heard, because his spirit was in a doubtfulness and manmerring upon the certainty of God's doings, he felt no consolation thereof, but much heaviness and anguish of mind. For those demands, "Will God absent himself for ever? Will he be no more merciful?" and such-like heavy and doubtful complaints, would never proceed but from a sorrowful and much troubled conscience. But now, after that God's spirit hath wrought in his spirit this assurance and judgment, that God can in him change the conditions of his miseries (as ye may see), he maketh no more complaint of doubtfulness, neither remembereth any more the fearfulness of his conscience, but goeth forth with repetition and rehearsal of all things com-

fortably, how that God in time past help troubled spirits and afflicted personages, that put their trust in him. So that of this we learn, that whosoever hath a sure faith in God, taketh consolation of God's word and works. And such as have not first true faith in God, cannot in the spirit receive comfort of God's word or works. Outwardly men may marvel at God and his works, but inwardly it easeth not the heaviness, nor yet quieteth the grudge of conscience.

Wherefore it behoveth us all, that we pray earnestly unto God to give us faith to believe his word and works, when we hear, read, or see them. For the word and works of God do nothing comfort the unfaithful, as we may see by the Scripture, where God saith, he stretched forth his hand all day long to a people that believed not; for such as have ears and hear not, eyes and see not, be rather the worse for God's word and works than the better. (Isaiah, lxxv. Rom. x. Isaiah, vi. John, xii.) Ye shall see where the spirit of David was replenished with faith: he was so assured and ascertained of God's present help, that he said he would not fear, although a thousand men environed and compassed him round about. (Psalm iii.) No, he would not fear, though he should walk in the shadow of death. (Psalm xxiii.) At another time, when faith quailed and waxed faint, he was trembling in his spirit, and fearful in his body: as we may see when he felt his spirit wax faint, he said, "My soul is troubled very sore, and my bones be weakened." (Psalm vi. xxxviii.) And in other of his Psalms he sheweth, that his soul was very heavy and comfortless, and could take no consolation. (Psalm xlii. xliii.)

Also when the spirit is assured of God's grace then the eyes cannot look upon any work of God, but the mind taketh by the contemplation and sight hereof unspeakable consolation; as David declareth

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in his Psalms, and saith, he would see the heavens the works of God's fingers, and would mark how one day was an induction to another, and how the heavens praised the Lord. (Psalm viii. xix. cxlviii.)

At another time, when the consolation and life of the spirit was overwhelmed with troubles, he could not see at all with his eyes, but cried and complained that he was stark blind. (Psalm xxxviii.) And also in that marvellous Psalm, in number lxxxviii. wherein prayer is made to be delivered from the horror and feeling of sin, the Prophet saith, that his eyes waxed dim and blind. The same is to be seen likewise in the crosses and afflictions that God sendeth. As long as true faith and confidence remain in the heart, all troubles be welcome and thankfully taken; as we read, when Job had news that his goods and children were taken from him, in manner suddenly, he most patiently said, "God gave them, and God hath taken them away; as God would, so it is done." (Job, i. ii.) But when faith quailed, and the spirit was troubled, then followed these impatient words: "I would my sin were laid in one balance, and my pain in another" (Job. vi.); as though God had laid more upon him than he had deserved. When the spirit was quieted, for all his poverty and nakedness, he rejoiced, and was contented with his birth and coming into the world, and also with the state in the world appointed unto him by God, saying, "Naked I came out of my mother's belly, and naked I shall depart hence again." (Job, i.) But when faith fainted, then came out these words: "The day, the night, and the time be cursed wherein I was born" (Job, iii.), with many more horrible words, as the text declareth. So that we see, where God's spirit wanteth, there is no learning nor consolation to be had of any thing; as it is opened in this Psalm, in that at the first time the Prophet recorded God's works, and was so troubled in his mind, that he occupied his cogitations this way:

“ Will God be no more merciful ? Hath God shut up his mercy in his ire ?” But now in the second record of God’s works, he beginneth his entrance clean contrary, and saith, God’s right hand can change his sorrow, and turn his heaviness into mirth. And upon this ground and sure hope of God’s promises, he proceedeth forth to a consideration and deep record of God’s facts in this sort : “ I will remember the works of the Lord,” &c.

In this verse and in the next following it be contained three kind of words ; remembrance, meditation, and speech. By the first we learn, that it profiteth nothing to read or hear God’s word, except we remember it, and bear it away with us : by the next we learn, that it availeth us not to learn and bear the word of God in remembrance, except, by meditation and thinking upon it, we understand what it meaneth : and by the third we learn, that neither the remembrance of it nor the understanding thereof profiteth, except we teach and instruct others in the same, of whom we have charge, if we may.

Now to consider further, we see how the Prophet beginneth with this word “ remembrance,” whereof it appeareth that he had learned before out of God’s word, God’s nature towards penitent sinners to forgive them ; and towards wilful, obstinate, and impenitent sinners, to be a just judge to punish them. Here is the ignorance of all people condemned, that never learn to know God’s word in sickness nor in health ; but when they be troubled or sick, they send for such as they think and fancy have learned and do remember how God’s word doth comfort in adversity. And then, if he that is sent for be not learned in God’s word, he cannot remember how God is wont to comfort the troubled or sick ; then all that ever the sick man heareth of an ignorant comforter or counsellor, is as clean void of consolation or counsel,

as though he had never sent for a counsellor or comforter. For no man can have more of another, than the other hath himself, which is neither knowledge, counsel, nor consolation out of God's word: therefore he is not able to give knowledge, consolation, nor comfort to another.

If the Prophet Asaph had been as the most part of the people now-a-days be, that fall sick and into many kinds of trouble, and had sent for an ignorant fool (which commonly is called a ghostly father), he had been in as good taking as these wretched souls be, that, being comfortless, seek comfort where none is to be had, seek knowledge where none is, and seek counsel where ignorance aboundeth. Let all men therefore remember this verse, that when the Prophet was in trouble, he remembered the wisdom and marvellous works of God (for he knew them before): so let all men and women learn, before they come into trouble, a true knowledge of God, that in the time of trouble they may remember it to their consolation. But now to the second word, where he saith, he will meditate in all the works of God.

Here is another notable doctrine, that neither the learning of God's word nor the remembrance thereof profiteth any thing, except it be understood and applied to the use that God hath appointed it for. And here be two sorts of people wonderfully condemned: the one sort be those, that for custom or bondage to their profession, do learn without the book a great part of the Scripture; or else by daily use in singing or saying their service (as it is called), they learn to sing and say a great part of the Bible. But this availeth nothing, for they understand it not in the sense and meaning that the Holy Ghost appointed it for, nor perchance the grammatical construction thereof. And these remembrances of God's word be nothing but lip-labour, and honouring of God with the mouth, but the heart is far away, which before

God is in vain, and of no estimation. (Isaiah, xxix. Matt. xv.) The other sort of people be such as profess the Gospel, that have learned much, and can remember much, but follow very little; so that they be nothing the better for it.

The third word is, that the Prophet saith, he will speak of God and his works, as outwardly and inwardly he remembereth them, and with his spirit doth meditate them, as it is likewise the part and duty of all Christian men so to do; for as they believe in the heart to justice, so will they confess it to salvation, as St. Paul saith to the Romans. (Chap. x.)

Here in this word be three sorts of people condemned: the one that will not confess and teach the truth, for fear of losing their advantage; the other will not confess and teach the truth, for sluggishness and sloth; and the third will not confess and teach the truth, for timidity and fear.

In the first sort be such as know doctrines for the soul, or medicines for the body, and yet because they get gain thereby, they would not have too many know thereof, lest their own gains should be the less. As we see, such a one as knoweth a good method and order to teach, would be loth it should be common, because his estimation and gain (as he thinketh) should diminish and decrease. The excellent physician would not have his cunning common, lest many men, as cunning as he, should part his gains amongst them.

The second sort of men be those that come to great livings by their learning, and when they have the reward of learning, they teach no more, as bishops and ministers of the church, whom the Prophet calleth dumb dogs that cannot bark (Isaiah, lvi.), their mouths be so choked with the bones of bishoprics and benefices. I speak of such as know the truth and love it, and not of such as neither know it nor love it: for although those men speak

but seldom, yet it is too much, for better it were never to speak, than to speak falsely.

The third sort be our Nicodemus's, that can speak of Christ in the night, or to their friends, but openly they will confess nothing with the mouth, nor do any thing outwardly for fear of the world, that should sound to God's glory. And these men be assured they shall have their reward, that Christ will deny them before his Father which is in heaven. (Matt. x.)

Of this we learn wherein our profession consisteth: first, to learn God's word; secondly, to bear it in our heart and remembrance; thirdly, to understand it; and fourthly, to speak of it to the glory of God, and the edifying of our neighbours: and God's word this way used shall keep us humble and lowly in prosperity, and patient and strong in adversity.

But in these two verses be more words necessary to be considered, if we will take consolation in adversity: the first, "I will (saith the Prophet) remember the works of the Lord, and that of old time" (or from the beginning). The second, "I will think also of all the works of the Lord," &c.

In this that the Prophet saith, he will remember the works of the Lord of old time, or from the beginning, we learn that it is expedient to know, or (at the least way) not to be ignorant of any book in the Scripture: for when we find not consolation in the one, we may find it in the other. And where he saith, he will remember all the works of the Lord (meaning as many as the Scripture maketh mention of), we be instructed, that we cannot see these works for our erudition, neither yet give the Almighty God thanks, except we learn them from one of his books to the other. And here is to be noted, that seeing we be bound to know and to be thankful for all the works of God contained in the Scripture, we be much in danger, as well for ignorance as unthankfulness,

that we know not the principal works of our own creation or redemption. We be therefore admonished to have books to read the works of God, and to be diligent to ask better learned than we be, what God's works do mean. As the children by God's law be bound to ask the parents, and the parents bound by the same to teach them: then shall both fathers and children find comfort and consolation against all temptations in the time of trouble and heaviness (Deut. iv. vi. xxxi.), as we see this man's remedy (by the Spirit of God) riseth from recording, meditating, and speaking of God's word and works.

Here hath this Prophet marvellously opened, how a man in trouble cometh to consolation and comfort. First, that the spirit and heart of man must have such strong faith, as may credit God's power, and also his good will, and believe that God both can and will for his truth's sake help the troubled conscience. Therefore Solomon giveth a godly and necessary commandment: "Keep thy heart with all circumspection, for of it proceedeth life." (Prov. iv.) So did David, when the Prophet Nathan had made him afraid for the murder of Uriah, and the adultery with Bathsheba, his conscience was in great anguish and fear, and among other things that he prayed for to God, he desired that God would create and make him a new heart (Psalm li.); that is to wit, to give him such a steadfast and burning faith, that in Christ his sinful heart might be purged. And secondarily, he prayeth to have so right and sure a spirit, that should not doubt of God's favour towards him. Thirdly, that God would always preserve his holy spirit with the heart regenerated, that from time to time the heart might be ruled in obedience towards God. Fourthly, he prayeth to be led with a willing spirit, that quietly and patiently he may obey God in adversities, without impatience or grudge against

God. And, where this knowledge and feeling of the favour of God is in the spirit, there followeth recording and remembrance of God's works, meditating and thinking upon heavenly things, and the tongue ready also to speak forth the glory of God, to God's honour and praise, and to the edifying of God's people and congregation, after this sort: "Thy way, O God, is in holiness: who is so great a God as God, even our God?" (Ver. 13.)

Here is a consolation much worthy to be learned and received of all troubled men; and it is this, to understand and perceive, that all the doings and facts of Almighty God be righteous, although many times the flesh judgeth, and the tongue speaketh the contrary, that God should be too severe, and punish too extremely: as though he did it rather of a desire to punish, than to correct or amend the person punished. As we see by Job's word, that wished his sins laid in one balance, and his punishment in another balance, as though God punished more extremely than justly. (Chap. vi.) The same it seemeth King David also felt, when he said, "How long, Lord, wilt thou forget me? for ever?" (Psalm xiii.) with like bitter speeches in the Scripture, complaining of God's justice, judgment, and severity. The same we read of Jeremiah the Prophet: he spake God's word truly, and yet there happened unto him wonderful great adversities, the terror whereof made him curse the day that he was born in. And doubtless, when he said, "Why hast thou deceived me, Lord?" (chap. xx.), he thought God was rather too extreme, than just in his punishment, to afflict him in adversity, and to suffer Passen the high priest and his enemy to be in quiet and tranquillity.

This Prophet Asaph was before in great trouble (as ye heard), and especially of the mind, that felt not a sure trust and confidence in God's mercy, and

thought of all extremities that to be (as it is indeed) the greatest, a mind desperate and doubtful of God's mercy ; yet now he saith, " God is holy in his way, and all that he doth is right and just."

We learn hereby, that the pot cannot say to the potter, " Why hast thou made me after this sort ?" (Jer. xix. Rom. ix.) Neither may the mortal man, in whom is nothing but sin, quarrel with the Lord, and say, What layest thou upon me ? But think, that although he had made us both blind, lame, and as deformed as monsters, yet had he made us better than ever we deserved. And in case he laid all the troubles of the world upon one man, yet are they less than one sin of man doth deserve. Thus hath the Prophet learned now and felt, and saith, " The doings of God be holy and right, and there is none to be compared unto him ;" and sheweth the cause why none is to be compared unto God. In the declaration whereof, he continueth seven verses, and so maketh an end of the Psalm.

The first cause why he saith none is to be compared unto God is this : " Thou art the Lord that dost wonders, and hast declared thy power amongst people." (Ver. 14.)

First, he noteth generally, that God is the doer of wonders and miracles, and afterwards he sheweth wherein God hath wrought these miracles. Of this we learn three doctrines : the one, that some men know generally, that God worketh all things marvellously ; the second, that other some know that God worketh in some men marvellously ; the third, that other also know that God worketh in themselves marvellously.

Of the first sort be such as know by God's works generally, that God hath, and doth dispose all things upon the earth, and nothing hath its beginning nor being but of God, of whom St. Paul speaketh to the

Romans, that by God's works they knew God, and yet glorified him not. (Rom. i.) Of the second sort be such, as more particularly know and speak of God's miracles; as such be that read how God of his singular favour preserved Noah and his family, and drowned all the world besides (Gen. vii.): how he brought the children of Israel out of Egypt (Exod. xiv.), and delivered the people from the captivity of Babylon, with such-like; and yet when they be in troubles themselves, these marvellous works and mercies shewed unto others, cannot comfort themselves. Of the third sort be such, as know generally the marvellous works of God, and perceive that in some God is particularly merciful; and from some he findeth in himself singularly the mercy of God; and from the remembrance of God's benefits unto others he findeth in himself the working of God's mercy, and findeth in his conscience such comfort indeed, that he remembereth others before him, that had of God's mercies in their time of troubles.

The most part of men consider generally, that God is the worker of miracles: the common sort of Christians consider, that God hath wrought miracles particularly upon others; but the very elect and Christians indeed, see the miracles of God wrought particularly upon others, and take consolation singularly of God's mercies themselves. As we see this Prophet marvellously declareth God's wonders, and putteth the general working of God's miracles between a singular working of wonders and a particular working of wonders.

The generality is this: "Thou art God that dost wonders, and hast declared thy power amongst people." The singularity and particularity of God's working of wonders is the one before, and the other behind. The singularity is in this, that he perceived that it was his own infirmity, that made him doubt

of God's promises ; and yet God's singular grace made him singularly feel and perceive that God singularly would be good unto him : the particularity is in this, that he saith, With God's right hand God delivered the posterity of Jacob and Joseph from the servitude of Egypt, &c. The way to consider the marvellous works of God is in a profitable consideration and sight of them, as well to know them as to be the better for them : for there is no man can take commodity or profit by God's goodness shewed unto a multitude, except he singularly receive gain thereby himself. As we see, when a whole multitude was fed marvellously with a few loaves and fewer fishes (almost five thousand people (John, vi.)), he taught the consolation and health of man's soul in his own blood ; but none was the better for it, but such as believed every man for himself that which Christ spake. The miracles and merciful help of Christ unto others, had nothing profited the poor woman of Canaan, except she herself had been partaker of the same. (Matt. xv.) And as it is in the works of God, that do comfort the man afflicted ; so is it in the works of God, that bring men into heaviness and sorrow for sin.

Generally, the word of God rebuketh sin, and calleth sinners to repentance ; particularly it sheweth unto us, how that David, Peter, Mary Magdalen, and others, repented. But to us those sorrows and repentance do no good, except we every man singularly repent and be sorrowful for his sins. For it is not another man's sickness that maketh me sick, nor another man's health that maketh me whole : no more is any other man's repentance my repentance, or any other man's faith my faith ; but I must repent, and I must believe myself to feel sorrowfulness for sin by the law, and remission thereof by faith in Christ : so that every private man must be in repentance,

sorry with the true repentant sorrow, and faithful with the true faithful. For as God himself is towards man, so be all his works and promises : for look to whom God is merciful, to the same be all his promises comfortable ; and to whom God is severe and rigorous, to the same God's threatenings be terrible, and his justice fearful. As King David saith, " With the holy thou wilt be holy, and with the innocent thou wilt be innocent ; with the chosen thou wilt be chosen, and with the perverse thou wilt be perverse." (Psalm xviii.)

Such as follow virtue and godliness, God increaseth with gifts and benefits ; and such as have wicked manners, and by false doctrine decline from the truth, in those God is severe and sharp. And except such persons repent, God will spoil them from all judgment of truth ; and being blind and destitute of knowledge, permit them to the power and dominion of most filthy lusts and abominable desires. So that such as would not love the beauty and excellency of virtue, shall tumble and wallow themselves like swine, in the filth and vomit of sin ; of the which abominations and just judgments of God, St. Paul speaketh in the Epistle to the Romans ; for this is to be noted : look as every man is, even so he thinketh of God. And as the good and godly man thinketh well of God, so doth the evil and wicked man think evil of God.

Some think that man and all worldly things be ruled and governed by God, with great justice and inscrutable wisdom, with all mercy and favour. Others think that God ruleth not this world and worldly things ; and in case they think he do, yet do they condemn his administration and rule of injustice and partiality, because God doth as it pleaseth himself, and not as man would have him do : and upon these diversities of judgments in men's minds,

God is to the godly merciful; and to the ungodly, severe and rigorous.

If the spirit of man judge truly and godly of him, by and by the spirit of man shall perceive and feel the heavenly influence of God's Spirit stirring and impelling his spirit to all virtue and goodness: if the spirit of man be destitute of the Spirit of God, and judge perversely and wickedly, the spirit of man shall feel the lack of God's Spirit and true judgment to blind the eyes of his mind, and cast himself into all abomination and sin, as the iniquity of man justly hath deserved: of the which thing cometh this, that as the virtue and godliness of godly men daily increaseth, even so doth the iniquity and abomination of the ungodly also increase. And look what place and pre-eminence God obtaineth with any man, in the same place and pre-eminence is the man with God. And such as do godly after God's word, honour and reverence the Almighty God; judging aright of God's might and providence, they give most humble thanks unto the mercy of God; that alone, and none but he, can teach or instruct the mind of man in true knowledge, nor incline his will to godly doings, nor inflame the soul with all her powers to the desire and fervent love of godliness and virtue. As we see by this Prophet Asaph in this place, that as long as his spirit wanted the help of God's Spirit, it judged doubtfully of God's mercy and promises: but when the Spirit of God hath exiled and banished doubtfulness, and placed this strong fortress of confidence, "The right hand of God can change this my woful and miserable state," with the judgment and feeling thereof, he was rapt and stricken with a marvellous love of God's wonders, and repeated them with great joy and consolation, what God had done generally to all men: after that, what he had done to some particular men and private na-

tions, naming Jacob and Joseph, whose offspring and succession he brought out of the land of Egypt, as it followeth in the Psalm:

Ver. 15. "Thou hast mightily delivered thy people, even the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah."

Of this verse we learn two consolations. The one, that every Christian troubled may see his elders and also his betters troubled; not that it is a comfort to a man that is afflicted to see another in trouble, but to mark that God loved none so well, but in this world he sent trouble unto, and excepted not his dear Son: wherefore, it is a consolation to the afflicted to be made like unto the godly fathers (that were before his time) by tribulation, and to remember, that although all Christian men be not brought under the captivity of Pharaoh in Egypt, nor under Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, yet there is an Egypt and a Babylon for every Christian member; that is to say, the captivity of sin, the bondage of the flesh, the severity of the law, the danger of the world, the enmity of infidels, the treason of dissembling friends, the wickedness of evil and devilish ordinances, the dissimulation of hypocrites, the perjury of inconstant persons, the breach of faithful promises, the inconstancy of the weak, the cruelty of Papists, the love of man, and the hatred of God, with many others; as the ignorance of God's law, the rebellion of the heart against it, frowardness of the will to consent unto it, diffidence and mistrust of God's mercy, boldness to sin in the time of health, faintness and mistrust of the remission thereof in sickness, love of vice and sin, hatred of virtue and godliness, sudden fallings from grace, slow rising unto it again, loathsomeness to die mortally, readiness to live wickedly, sorrowfulness to forsake this world, great delight to use it evil whilst we have it, loath to seek heavenly things, glad to seek earthly things, nothing feeling the poverty and

trouble of the soul, always grudging at the poverty and trouble of the body, with innumerable other captivities that every Christian is entangled withal, as every man may judge by his own life.

The next consolation is to see the truth of God's help promised to all men, when they be troubled, to have been declared, opened, and verified in others, in time past. For this is the greatest consolation that can be to any man, in trouble or in sickness, when he is assured of such help and such medicines as never were used; but did help the afflicted and heal the sick.

Now against all the troubles of man, and also against all the sickness of man, God hath promised his present and helping mercy: the which medicine and help never failed, but did help as many as put their trust therein: therefore doth this Prophet Asaph establish and assure himself of God's help against his grievous temptations and troubles that he suffered, by recording that his griefs were no greater, nor his troubles more dangerous, than Jacob's, Joseph's, and their posterities, nor yet so grievous: insomuch that, seeing the mercy of God could help the greater troubles in his predecessors, he could help and ease the less in him that was presently troubled. And being so assured of God's help, he spake at the end of this verse, *Selah*: as though he had said, It is most true that God can help and comfort me, as he help and comforted my forefathers. And for the better consolation and more firm assurance, he sheweth, how marvellously he did help the posterity of Jacob and Joseph after this sort:

Ver. 16. "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid; the depths also were troubled."

In this that he saith, the waters were afraid, when they saw God: first, the manner of speech in the

Scripture is to be noted, that attributeth unto insensible things sensible qualities, as in this place are attributed unto the water sight and fear, whereas indeed properly the water cannot see nor fear. But when the Scripture useth any such phrase or speech, there are to be marked divers doctrines of edifying : first of God ; then insensible creatures ; and thirdly, of man, for whose sake the Scripture sometimes speaketh unto insensible creatures, as though they were sensible, and worketh miracles in them for the instruction and amendment of sensible and reasonable man.

The learning touching God is, that he worketh his will, and useth his creatures, as it seemeth unto his wisdom inscrutable most meet and convenient, as here he troubleth and altereth the condition of the seas and waters. These waters were appointed by God, in the third day of the creation, to be in one place, and were called the sea, a pleasant element, and a beautiful thing to see : and God said, It was good (Gen. i.), as the effect thereof sheweth indeed ; for it nourisheth the earth with necessary moisture, by privy veins and secret passages secretly passing through the earth. And when the floods, that do moisten the earth, have done their office, they return into their old lodging the sea again, from whence riseth the matter of showers and rain to moisture from above, that floods beneath cannot be conveyed unto. And it serveth for transporting the necessities of one realm to the other, quietly suffering the ships to pass with great gain and pleasure.

These and many more commodities God worketh by this insensible creature, when it is calm and navigable : but when he moveth it with his winds and tempests, it is so horrible in itself, that no man may, without peril and death, travel within it, so raging and fearful is that pleasant element of the water,

when God moveth it. It hath (by God's appointment) his time of calm, and time of storm; time to profit men, and time to undo men; time to be a refuge for men in the days of peril, and time to be a grave and sepulchre for men; time to conjoin strange nations together, and time to separate them again, as it pleaseth the Creator Almighty God to appoint and direct it.

The doctrine that toucheth the insensible creature itself is, that it can be no longer calm, nor any longer troubled, than it pleaseth the heavenly Governor to dispose it. And here is to be noted against such men as attribute storms and calms to fortune; whereas only the voice of the Lord moveth tempests, and sendeth fair weather. (Psalm xxix.) It is also a doctrine against all men, that do think the waters and seas may be moved, and cease, at their own pleasure; which is contrary to this Prophet's doctrine, that saith, "The waters saw the Lord, and were afraid." So that their trouble riseth from the commandment of the Lord, and they cannot do what they lust, but what God biddeth them to do. It is godly set forth afterwards in another Psalm (cxiv.), wherein the passage of the children of Israel is mentioned, as it is in this Psalm.

The doctrine touching man in this verse is a declaration of man's obstinacy and stubbornness. The insensible creature the waters, that lack both life and reason, at every commandment be as the Lord their Maker commandeth them to be: with every tempest they be troubled, and with every calm so plain and quiet, that it seemeth rather a stablished land, than a variable sea. But let God send his word unto man, and the contents thereof threaten the tempest of all tempests, eternal death, hell fire, and God's everlasting displeasure: yet man will not hear nor see them, nor yet be moved any thing at

all ; or let God gently and favourably offer his mercies unto man, and by his word exhort him never so much to repentance, it is for the most part in vain. Therefore God, by his Prophets Moses and Isaiah, called heaven and earth to witness against man's stubbornness and hardness of heart. (Deut. xxxii. Isa. i.)

There is also out of this trouble of the water this doctrine to be learned, how to receive consolation, and how to learn fear by the creatures of God that bear no life, and yet be thus troubled. Consolation in this sort, when the penitent man that suffereth affliction and trouble, seeth insensible things moved and unquieted that never offended, he shall judge the less wonder at his own trouble. When he seeth that a sinner and a wretched offender of God is punished, he shall learn fear. When he seeth God doth punish his creatures that never offended, for the sin of man, what punishment is man worthy to have, that is nothing but sin itself? And what fear should this bring into Christian men's consciences, to know that no creature deserveth punishment, no creature disobeyeth God, but the devil and man? Oh ! what man or woman can with faith look upon the least flowers of the field, and not hate himself? In summer-time, when men shall see the meadows and gardens so marvellously apparalled with flowers of every colour, so that they shall not be able to discern whether their beauty better please the eye, or their sweet savour the nose, what may they learn, in thinking of themselves (as the truth is) that there is nothing in them but filth and sin, that most heinously stink before the face of God? And when man shall perceive that flowers fade, and lose both beauty to the eye, and sweet savour to the nose, that never transgressed, what may miserable man think he is worthy to lose, that is nothing but sin, and ever offendeth? Again, when man shall perceive that God

thus marvellously, after long winter and great storms, doth raise out of the vile earth so beautiful flowers, plants, and trees, what consolation may the man take, that hath his faith in Christ, to think that all his sins in his precious blood be forgiven, and after long persecution and cruel death, he shall come to eternal life. After this sort did the Prophet consider the works of God, and the troubles of his creatures, and received great consolation thereby.

In the end of this verse the Prophet saith, "The depths were troubled." In the which words he hath aptly shewed the mighty power of God, and perceiveth how the record of God's fact may be his consolation. In this that he saith, "The depths were troubled," there be divers understandings. If he mean of the seas, when they are troublesome and tempestuous by foul weather, he speaketh rather after the judgment of such (as suffer the trouble and peril of the waves) that think at one time they fall to the bottom of the sea, and at another time they be rather upon high mountains than upon the waters, the rages thereof be so extreme: yet indeed, the bottom of the sea be not felt, neither doth the ship that is saved descend so far; but the tempests be so sore, that it seemeth to the sufferers thereof that no extremity can be more. In this sense it serveth marvellously the Prophet's purpose: for as they that endure the tempests of the sea, think there could be no more extremity than they sustain, so do they that suffer the tempest of mistrust and despair (for a time) of the conscience, think they could endure no more extremity of conscience: whereas indeed, if God should suffer them to feel the extremity, it were eternal death, as the extremity of the sea in tempests is shipwreck and loss of man and goods. But if it be understood as it standeth in the letter, then hath the Prophet relation to the mighty hand of God, that

brake the Red Sea even unto the very bottom, and also the water of Jordan, that his people might have both a nigh way, a safe way, and a glorious way towards the land that the Lord had promised them. (Exod. xiv. Joshua, iii.) And then in this sense we learn, that although water and wind, with all troubles else, cover the face of the earth, in the bottom of the sea, and is not possible to come to the use of man, even so the troublesome temptations and great terror of God's wrath against sin cover the soul of man, that, unto the judgment of the flesh, it shall never come to have the use and fruition of God's holy favour again.

But now, as we see by miracle, God maketh dry the depth of horrible seas, and turneth the bottom of them to the use of man, so doth he in the blood of Christ (by the operation of the Holy Ghost) dry up and clean lade out the ponds and deep seas of mistrust and heaviness out of the soul, and turneth the soul itself to the use of his own honour, in the joys everlasting. And as the water covereth the beauty of the land, so do sin and temptation cover the image and beauty of man's soul in this life. But as with a word God can remedy the one, so with the least of his mercies he can redress the other. And for the better experience and more certainty thereof, we see it proved by this Prophet Asaph in this place. For the ground was never more overwhelmed with water, nor the bright sun with dim clouds, than was this poor Prophet's spirit with heaviness and sorrow of sin and temptations. Therefore he feelth how God easeth the heart, and recordeth how he banished floods and waters, to make his people a way to rest and tranquillity.

Ver. 17. "The clouds poured out water, the air thundered, and thine arrows went abroad."

The Prophet remembereth the marvellous inunda-

tion and drowning of the world in the days of Noah, that drowned all the world for sin, saving such as were in the ark or ship with Noah. And he remembereth also the horrible thunder that was heard of the people, when God gave his law unto them upon Mount Sinai. Likewise, he calleth to remembrance the plagues of Egypt, wherewithal God punished Pharaoh, his people, and the whole land (Gen. vii. Exod. xix.); which pains and plagues he calleth (after the phrase of Scripture) arrows and darts. (Exodus, v. vi. vii. viii. ix. x. xi.) These remembrances may be comforts to the hearers and to the readers, two manners of ways. First in this, that God, when he punisheth, punisheth justly, as he did the whole world for sin: whereof he Prophet gathereth, If sin justly merited do trouble all the generation of man, it is no great marvel, though sin trouble me, that am but one man, and a vile sinner. If sin brought all flesh unto death, saving those that were in the ship, is it any marvel, though sin make me to tremble and quake? Again, if God, when he gave the law to Moses and to the people, spake out of thunder, declaring what a thing it was to transgress that law, insomuch that all the people were afraid to hear the Lord speak, and desired that Moses might supply his room (Exod. xix.); what marvel is it that my conscience trembleth, feeling that my soul hath offended the laws of God? And if Pharaoh and his realm were sore afraid of God's outward plagues, what cause have I to fear the inward dread and sorrowful sight of sin, shewed unto me by God's law? So that we may take this consolation out of this place, that God is a just Judge to punish sin, and not a tyrant, that punisheth of affection or wilful desire. And so said David, "Whensoever or howsoever thou punish (let men say and judge as they

list), thou art just, and righteous be all thy doings." (Psalm li. x. cxxx.)

The other consolation is, that in the midst of all adversities, God preserved penitent and faithful sinners; as in the time of the universal flood, the water hurted not Noah, nor such as were in the ship. In the time of Pharaoh's plagues, the Israelites took no harm. At the giving of the law, the Israelites perished not with lightning and thunder. Even so sorrows and anguish, diffidence and weakness of faith, they are plagues and punishments for all men by reason of sin; yet penitent sinners, by reason of faith in Christ, take no hurt nor damnation by them, as it appeareth by this Prophet that was troubled in the spirit and in the body, as marvellously as could be, but yet in Christ escaped the danger, as all men shall do that repent and believe. (Rom. viii.) Whereof we learn, that as the rain falleth generally, and yet bettereth no earth to bring forth her fruit, but such as is apt to receive the rain (stony rocks and barren ground being nothing the better); even so do the plagues and rain of God's displeasure plague all mankind, but none be the better therefor, but such as repent and bewail their sins, that gave God just occasion thus to punish them. (Heb. vi. x.) The same is to be considered also of the verse that followeth, which is this:

Ver. 18. "The lightning shone upon the ground, the earth was moved, and shook therewithal."

By these manner of speeches, "The lightning shone, and the earth quaked," the Prophet setteth forth the strength and might of God's power, and willeth men to love him and to fear him; for he is able to defend and preserve his faithful, and to punish and plague the wicked. And the like he saith in the verse following:

Ver. 19. "Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the deep waters; and thy footsteps are not known."

He taketh comfort of this miracle, that God brought the Israelites through the Red Sea, in this that the waters knew the Israelites, and gave place unto them, that they might dry-footed go through them. But when King Pharaoh and his people would have followed in the same path, persecuting God's people, the sea would make no way for him, nor yet shew the steps where the Israelites trod, but overwhelmed them in most desperate deaths. So in the seas of temptations, such as put their trust in the Lord, pass, and never perish by them. (Psa. cxxi. cxxv. xiii. xlv. liv. lxxi.): whereas, such as put not their trust in the Lord, perish in temptations, as Pharaoh and his army did by water. (Exod. xiv.) And the next verse that concludeth the Psalm sheweth by what means the Israelites were under God saved in the Red Sea, by the hands of Moses and Aaron, as it appeareth,

Ver. 20. "Thou leddest thy people like sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

Of this verse the afflicted may learn many consolations. First, that the best people that be, are no better able to resist temptations, than the simple sheep is able to withstand the brier that catcheth him. The next, that man is of no more ability to beware of temptations, than the poor sheep is to avoid the brier, being preserved only by the diligence of the shepherd. The third, that as the shepherd is careful of his entangled and briered sheep, so is God of his afflicted faithful. And the fourth is, that the people of Israel could take no harm of the water, because they entered the sea at God's commandment. Whereof we learn, that no danger can hurt, when God doth command us to enter into it, and

all dangers overcome us, if we choose them ourselves, besides God's commandment. As Peter, when he went at God's commandment upon the water, took no hurt (Matt. xiv.) ; but when he entered into the bishop's house, upon his own presumption, he was overcome, and denied Christ. The Israelites, when they fought at God's commandment, the peril was nothing ; but when they would do it of their own heads, they perished. (Numb. xiv.) So that we are bound to attend upon God's commandment, and then no danger shall destroy us, though it pain us.

The other doctrine is in this, that God used the ministry of Moses and Aaron, in the deliverance of his people, who did command them to do nothing but that the Lord did first bid. Whereof we learn, that such as be ministers appointed of God, and do nothing but as God commandeth, are to be followed, as St. Paul saith, " Follow me, as I follow Christ." (1 Cor. xv. xi.) And these men can by the word of God give good counsel and great consolation, both for body and soul ; as we perceive this Prophet, in marking God's doings unto the Israelites, applied by grace the same wisdom and helping mercy unto himself, to his eternal rest through Jesus Christ in the world to come. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all laud and praise world without end. Let all Christians say, Amen.

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